THE

MONTHLY REPOSITORY

OF

Theology and General Literature.

No. XXIX.] MAY. [Vol. III.

BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. WILLIAM WOOD, OF LEEDS, BY MRS. CAPPE.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, *York, April* 17, 1808.

I HAVE been desired to supply you with a memoir of my late invaluable friend the reverend William Wood, and were I able to delineate to others, with any truth of colouring, a faithful resemblance of that vivid portrait of his many talents and virtues engraven for ever on my own remembrance, I should with the greatest alacrity take up my pen; for what means more likely to call forth every latent energy, and to strengthen and invigorate every virtuous resolution, than the frequent and serious contemplation of departed excellence? But though I cannot do this as well as I should wish, I will attempt it as well as I am able, and leaving it to others to draw a finished picture, will merely sketch out a few leading features which may be soothing to the sorrow of those by whom he was most justly esteemed and beloved, and useful to others who did not enjoy the privilege of his friendship and acquaintance.

Mr. Wood was distinguished, during the period of his academical education at Hoxton, for the vigour and comprehension of his mind, the integrity and sobriety of his character, the ardour of his pursuit after knowledge, the vivacity and quickness of his imagination, and the perfect regularity of his conduct. He was early introduced to the late eminent Dr. Price, who well knew how to value and appreciate his many uncommon endowments; and a vacancy taking place at Mill Hill Chapel in Leeds, in the year 1773, by the removal of the late Dr. Priestley to superintend the education of the two Sons of the Marquis of Landsdowne, (then Lord Shelburne,) he was warmly recommended to that congregation by Dr. Price, and unanimously chosen by them to become their minister. Here he remained stationary to the time of his death, and how acceptable he was to his people, how highly he was esteemed, beloved and honoured by them, the veneration in which

they hold his memory, and the tears of unfeigned sorrow which yet bedew his new-made grave, will amply testify. He died on Friday, the first day of the present month, of an inflammation of the bowels, in the 64th year of his age. He had a most severe attack of a liver complaint and of the gout in his stomach in the autumn of 1806, which brought his life into the utmost danger; and at the very moment when little or no hope remained of his own recovery, Mrs. Wood, with whom he had been happily united almost 30 years, was seized with a violent fever, which terminated her life in a few days; this heavy and deep affliction, when his friends durst inform him of it, he bore with the greatest resignation and fortitude: he considered her as having only anticipated him a little time—it was but to perform a few more duties, and they should again be united in some nobler mansion of their Father's house.. He was reduced to such extreme feebleness, that for many months after this trying event, he was unable to walk down stairs, and during the whole of that time, one of his own sons, who is a merchant in Leeds, and three other young gentlemen, members of his congregation, took regular turns every morning and evening, and carried him from his own apartment into his sitting room*. It was not until the following July that he was able to resume his ministerial labours; but his mental powers were never impaired, and although he was transformed from great apparent vigour, to the semblance of a venerable old man, yet he seemed so entirely recovered, as to afford the most sanguine hope of many prolonged years of usefulness and comfort; he could again enjoy the society of his friends, delight them by his wonted cheerfulness, and instruct them by his edifying conversation. He preached twice, the Sunday preceding his death, with a degree of animation which astonished all who heard him; his morning subject was the seducibility of the human heart, the danger of ambition, and the extreme importance of frequently and seriously examining our own real character. The text was taken from the 13th verse, of the viii. chapter of the 2nd of Kings. When it was afterwards remarked in the vestry, that Mr. Wood had this day even surpassed himself, a gentleman present replied, "He has indeed been admirable; but it strikes me, that the whole of his manner, resembled the bright and vivid light of a shining taper, a few moments before it expires."

* Of one of these young gentlemen, who is now on a voyage to a distant country, I shall mention the following anecdote. He is the eldest son of a very numerous family, and his maternal grandfather having bequeathed him a considerable estate, which he was to possess on the death of his parents, he made a deed of gift unknown to them the moment he came of age, which should enable his father who is a merchant, to throw it into trade, or to dispose of it as he pleased, for the equal benefit of his twelve younger brothers and sisters. His disinterested generosity is repaid by the gratitude and thorough confidence of all his family, and, the whole of his conduct being equally exemplary, by the esteem and regard of all his acquaintance. I would ask my young readers whether any mode of mere self-indulgence could have yielded so pure and sublime an enjoyment?

Mrs Stonefield

This gentleman had doubtless remarked that the extraordinary animation he had witnessed, was the strong effort of a powerful mind, over an enfeebled bodily frame, and that it was not probable it should thus triumph any more. But perhaps, Mr. Editor, I ought to have attempted a further sketch of the character of this eminent person, before I adverted to the sorrowful event which has removed him from us; let it however be remembered, that those impressions which are most vivid press first upon the mind, and that it is only two short weeks since these last events, so mournful and unexpected, have taken place.

Mr. Wood was educated by his parents in strict Calvinistic principles, and there is reason to believe that he entered on his studies for the ministry, under the full influence of those sentiments. It would be interesting to inquire by what gradual steps and peculiar process his mind disengaged itself from a system by which many are held in bondage through life, and which he afterwards considered as extremely erroneous, and highly unfavourable to human happiness. We know indeed that the change in his opinions took place, in consequence of a diligent study of the scriptures in the original languages, carefully compared with the works of God, of which he was an accurate observer and warm admirer, and which every where unfold the infinite goodness as well as wisdom of the supreme Architect: and we know also that his mind could not be biassed by any views of worldly ambition or interest, for with his talents to what celebrity and affluence might he not have attained, even without the pale of a lucrative establishment, could he have gone with the tide of popular opinion? His first change of sentiment was to low Arianism, but before his appointment to Mill Hill chapel he had become an Unitarian in the strictest sense of that term: he always maintained however that Arians were entitled to that denomination, and regretted that the matter should ever have been warmly contested, as tending to excite unnecessary alienation from each other in Christians, who are certainly agreed in every thing essential to piety and virtue*. He devoted much time for many

* I shall here insert a note of Mr. Wood's on this subject, affixed to a sermon preached by him in the year 1800. "The propriety of this name (viz. Unitarian,) as exclusively belonging to those who do not hold the pre-existence of Christ has been called in question, no less by the followers of Athanasius, than by those of Arius. I confess I see no reason why it should not be applied in its strictest sense to the *latter*. They acknowledge the proper unity of the divine nature, undistinguished by difference of persons as well as undivided into a multitude of parts. All the difference between them and other Unitarians relates to the rank which the head of the Christian church sustains in the general creation of God. Both parties regard him as a *creature* deriving his being from the infinite source of all excellence: in this main point they exactly agree; and the divine authority of the gospel appears to stand on precisely the same foundation whether we consider him as a *superangelic spirit*, possessed of inconceivably extensive but still subordinate powers, or as a man in the common sense of the term, raised up by the Universal Parent, to answer extraordinary purposes in the administration of his government, and for that end furnished by him with every requisite endowment. Which opinion is embarrassed with the fewest difficulties and is best supported by the general tenor of scripture, is a different question."

years to the diligent study of the Jewish and Christians scriptures, and from time to time most conscientiously unfolded and enforced those sacred truths from the pulpit, which he believed to be most conducive to the moral and religious improvement of his hearers. He did not often dwell on subjects which are merely controversial, it being his great object rather to form his hearers to a truly Christian temper, than to render them acute disputants; conceiving, that love to God and good will towards all men, as his children and our brethren, is the very essence of the gospel. Most particularly did he avoid in his public discourses the unedifying disputes, at this day so warmly agitated by many very worthy persons, on the subject of a celebrated sermon lately published by a clergyman of the established church *. What might be his precise opinion respecting the particular fact to which that sermon relates, I am not competent to state, but he greatly disapproved of the extreme importance attributed to the controversy by some, and of the spirit of party excited by it in others. In all the social and domestic connexions, as a neighbour, a master of a family, a friend, a father and a husband, his conduct was not only exemplary but singularly amiable. For some years he took a limited number of young ladies as pupils, who in consequence enjoyed a privilege which very seldom falls to the lot of females, and who will long have reason to rejoice in the enlargement of mind and valuable acquisition of useful knowledge, which by this means fell to their share.

Few persons had more enlightened views than our departed friend, of the true nature and great importance of civil and religious liberty, to the prosperity, improvement and happiness, both of the governors and governed. No one more warmly admired the English constitution as exhibited in its native purity, or more sincerely regretted every deviation from its genuine principles. The war system, so unduly extolled by those who are interested in its continuance, a multitude alas how numerous! he sincerely deprecated. One of the latest acts of his life was the address made by him in the Cloth-hall at Leeds, which he delivered with uncommon animation, on the subject of the petition for peace. To one or two of his friends who differed from him in opinion, not as to the object of the petition, but as to the time of presenting it, he feelingly replied, "Whether it be *the time* or not, I will not dispute, but this I know, that it is *my time*, and that as an aged minister of the gospel of peace, I feel it an imperious duty to bear this public testimony." It is much to be regretted that Mr. Wood should have published so very little. To himself indeed it is now of no importance that the knowledge of his literary eminence should scarcely have extended beyond the confined circle of his own immediate connexions; but to them, and to society at large, the loss is very great, for the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which he had accumulated,

* See a Sermon, by the Rev. Francis Stone.

on moral, theological and scientific subjects were "neither few nor small." It was his intention to have selected and prepared for the press a volume of sermons, but this was never done, and being deterred perhaps by the injudicious zeal of surviving friends, who not unfrequently bring forward what the author himself would have consigned to oblivion, he has left orders in his will that not any of them shall be published, and that all his other papers shall be destroyed. The leading characteristic of all his compositions on whatever subject, was the air of originality which under his management it assumed; the spark of genius never failed to irradiate the whole, and to throw new lights even on those truths which are already well known and established. He had paid particular attention to the manner of delivering his discourses, which was peculiarly forcible and energetic, it being his decided opinion that those things ought not to be neglected, of themselves however unimportant, on which the acceptableness, and consequently the usefulness of a public speaker so greatly depends. His favourite relaxation from severer labours was the study of natural history, in which he was a great proficient, and which in his mind was always subservient to the great interests of piety and virtue, as well as to the mere extension of knowledge.

Among the many who will long have cause to lament the loss of this eminent person, are the friends of the academical institution, removed from Manchester to this city, of which he was the firm and able supporter, the warm and judicious patron. At his instance it was, that his highly esteemed friend, the present excellent theological tutor, was prevailed upon, without any view to pecuniary advantage, to hazard an undertaking, arduous in the extreme, and beset with difficulties of which those only who are acquainted with all the circumstances can form an adequate idea. But he saw and felt the importance of continuing and supporting an institution so closely connected with the interests of truth, and of pure, unadulterated, unsophisticated Christianity. This friend he well knew possessed the learning and the talents, and he perceived in his character, the dispositions, the habits, and the virtues, which would eminently qualify him for that important station. He had been unable, since the severe illness already mentioned, to visit the institution in person, but he heard with delight of its increasing success; and when informed last year at Buxton, by a gentleman who had been present, of the credit with which the students had passed their general examination at the end of the session, his heart was too full for utterance, and he shed tears of joy. How eloquent is the voice which issues from the grave of such a minister and such a man in favour of the only institution at this time in the kingdom, where young men can be educated on principles similar to his own! Surely it will not plead in vain; other friends will arise to its support, (and it requires support) who if they have not all his talents, will at least imbibe his virtuous zeal, and truly philanthropic spirit.

The last letter he ever wrote was to Mr. Wellbeloved, on Monday, the 28th of last month, in answer to one he had addressed to him on some important business relative to the institution. He did not feel himself very well, but he hoped in a few days to confer with himself and Mr. Brown, (the classical and mathematical tutor) more at large on the subject. But "he who seeth not as man seeth," had otherwise ordained. What were the feelings of his friend, when instead of the promised interview, an express arrived with the account of his death? Mr. Wellbeloved was requested to perform the last sad offices of funeral respect, the whole congregation attended in mourning, and three dissenting ministers, of different religious denominations, were among the supporters of the pall. The painful duty devolved upon him also of preaching a funeral sermon on the following Sunday. The writer of this imperfect memoir accompanied him to Leeds, and a more impressive scene was never witnessed. The chapel was exceedingly crowded--the character given of their revered pastor was just, striking and appropriate—it came from the heart of the preacher, and could not fail to reach the hearts of the auditors—every eye was filled with tears—how unlike is this day, was the universal sentiment—how unlike to the happy days never more to return, when we were wont to repair together to the house of God rejoicing! But wherefore this deep and unavailing sorrow? Ye do not lament that the sufferings of your friend were not longer protracted, that his descent to the tomb was not marked by the enfeebling progress of universal decay, that he is entered before ye were prepared to expect it, "to the rest that remaineth for the people of God?" No, it is for yourselves that ye weep, for he was your wise and kind instructor, your judicious and ever ready counsellor, your faithful and steady friend. Sanctify to yourselves the awful dispensation. Ye will revere his memory, ye will delight to dwell on the virtues which so endeared him to you, ye will copy them in your lives, and imprint them on your hearts, they will be written there, "as with a pen of iron"—"engraven as on a rock, for ever."

If, Mr. Editor, I have encroached too much on the patience of your readers, I must rest my apology in the interest of the subject, and remain with sincere wishes for the increased success of your liberal Magazine,

Your constant reader,

CATH. CAPPE.

PARTICULARS OF THE LATE REV. DR. STURGES, BY DR. TOULMIN.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

Birmingham,
April 6, 1808.

SIR,

You will oblige and gratify me, if you allow me a column in your publication, for additional particulars to your *Obituary* relative

to the late *Dr. Sturges*, in the Repository for last December *. I had pleasure in seeing that tribute of respect to the memory of that gentleman; and from sentiments of esteem for his character and of gratitude for some personal and handsome attentions, I wish to state some circumstances, that I am certain will do him much credit in the opinion of liberal men. On the publication of my "Letters" to him, I directed a copy to be forwarded to himself, and another to Dr. Lowth, the Bishop of London, to whom his "Considerations on the present Church Establishment" were addressed. On the receipt of it, I was politely favoured with the following letter.

Reverend Sir, *London, Feb.* 21, 1782.

"On my coming hither a few days ago, I met with the *Letters* which you have been pleased to address to me; and thank you for the civility and on the whole the candour with which you treat me and which I think becomes us all on these occasions, if we consider ourselves as scholars, gentlemen and Christians.

"I shall probably leave the subject in debate between us as it stands, to the judgment of the public; but may perhaps in a little time, when I return into the country, trouble you in private with a few strictures on your Letters just to give you my own opinion on the principal arguments contained in them.

I am, Rev. Sir, with respect,
Your most obedient servant,
J. STURGES."

In the November following, I was obliged with his remarks on the "Letters" filling near four sheets of quarto post paper:

"Written," as he was pleased to express himself, "freely and unreservedly after an attentive consideration of them; but I hope not in a manner to give you any offence. I continue quite of the same mind to leave the subject in debate between us as it stands, to the judgment of the public; whom we should both of us find, little interested in such a controversy were it prolonged. These remarks in private you will I hope accept as a mark of that attention to your *Letters* which I think they deserve.

"I desire to repeat my thanks to you for the civility and *on the whole* the candour with which you have treated me. My expression is a little qualified, because you will see in my remarks, that I think it not quite preserved in one or two instances in your last letter. I am sorry that the spirit of controversy, religious controversy especially, should be such in general as to make civility and candour in it rather singular.

"The Bishop of London desired me to present his compliments to you and thanks for your *Letters*.

I am, Reverend Sir,
With much respect,
Your obedient humble servant,
J. STURGES."

Dr Sturges considered joining his name with Mr. Robinson's, p. 85. as the least candid thing in all the "Letters." Had there been a call for a second edition of the "Letters," the author would have availed himself of Dr. Sturges's strictures to have corrected, or strengthened, or elucidated more fully his own arguments, though he could not consider himself at liberty, without the writer's express permission to have published them. The debate was never resumed. But the correspondence between Dr. Sturges and the author of the "Letters" did not end thus. From that time the former constantly paid a polite and liberal attention to the latter, by sending him a copy of every publication, as soon as it came from the press: and seldom did an opportunity for the author of the "Letters" to return the favour by similar testimonies of respect occur, but the receipt was acknowledged by a letter, written in such terms of regard and candid

* M. Repos, vol. ii. p. 662.

concession, that it might incur the censure of vanity to refer to them, did it not reflect honour on Dr. Sturges's liberality; which was heightened by this circumstance, that the publications sent for his acceptance, in general militated with his views and sentiments on theological points. The author of the "Letters" had once an opportunity to pay his respects in person, to Dr. Sturges, at Alverstoke, and was received by him with very friendly and cordial politeness, accompanied with invitations to dine with him; which circumstances obliged me to decline.

In connexion with this view of Dr. Sturges's candid spirit I am tempted to quote a passage, on religious discussions, in his "Reflections on the Principles and Institutions of Popery," as expressive of the excellent trait in his character, which it was the design of this communication to exhibit. "Discussions of Religious Disputes," says the doctor, "are generally not very edifying, either as coming from the press, or delivered in places of public worship; and they are seldom free from a degree of warmth and acrimony, which do more harm by the breach of charity, than good by the investigation of what either party supposes to be truth. For such discussions must very much consist of constant censure on the adverse party; and I do not envy the man who takes pleasure in finding fault. It is always painful to me to represent human nature under her worst aspect." P. iii. 4to ed.

Dr. Sturges's "Strictures on the Letters," were accompanied with a present of a tract, not noticed in your Obituary; entitled "A Letter to a Bishop, occasioned by the late Petition to Parliament, for Relief in the Matter of Subscription. The Second Edition corrected. With a Postscript containing some Considerations on Tests, 1773."

In 1802, Dr. Sturges published "Thoughts on the Residence of the Clergy, and on the Provisions of the Statutes of the Twenty First Year of Henry VIII. c. 13." It is well observed in the Obituary of the Athenæum for Nov. 1807, that "his solicitude for the credit and benefit of the clergy so forcibly expressed," in this tract, "evince him to have been sincerely interested in their welfare and comfort."

Dr. Sturges was nephew to Bishop Lowth, by his mother, a daughter of the Rev. William Lowth, Prebendary of Winchester, and the well known and learned Commentator on the Prophets; and the author of other valuable theological writings.

The preceding supplement to your Obituary, of the learned Dr. Sturges will, it is hoped, be acceptable to your readers, and be regarded as an act of justice to an amiable and distinguished character, while it holds up to imitation and esteem in the example of the Doctor, who was, it is to be considered, the person attacked by the "Letters," a pleasing instance of that suavity of manners and generosity of retaliation, which too seldom have occurred among polemical writers. The author of the "Letters," by controverting the principles and arguments of Dr. Sturges gained a very respectable and attentive literary friend.

I am, Sir, your's, &c.

JOSHUA TOULMIN.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

MR. BELSHAM'S VINDICATION OF HIS ACCOUNT OF MODERN ARIANS; WITH A POSTCRIPT IN REPLY TO "A CHURCHMAN'S" ATTACK ON THE UNITARIANS.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

Hackney,

SIR, *April* 16, 1808.

Not being a *bush-fighter*, I do not think myself bound to enter the lists with every assailant, who draws his bow behind the covert of an anonymous signature. Your readers however, may perhaps expect, that I should make some defence against the accusation exhibited in your last Repository by a correspondent, who signs himself A, p. 134.

In the first place, in bar of the prosecution, I plead a flaw in the indictment. Your correspondent charges me with having affirmed of the *Modern Arians*, (for so it seems they are now christened,) that "*no motive can be found for their usurping the name* of Arians, unless it be to screen themselves from the reproach that is annexed to the obnoxious term Socinian, and perhaps to save the credit of their orthodoxy, by joining occasionally in the popular hue and cry against those who profess the primitive faith of the proper humanity of Jesus Christ." This, Sir, is contrary to fact; I do not make the peremptory assertion which your correspondent imputes to me. My words are these, it is not indeed *easy to conceive* why they chuse to assume a name with which their tenets so little correspond, unless it be, &c. These expressions, if I am not mistaken, are of a very different import from those which your correspondent has been pleased to substitute, and which would, to be sure, have answered his purpose better. I think therefore that on this ground, I am clearly entitled to a *noli prosequi*, if not to a verdict in my favour.

Waving however this privilege, I will fairly meet your correspondent's charge; not indeed upon his ground, but my own. It is not easy to conceive why modern Arians assume a name with which their tenets so little correspond, unless to screen themselves from the reproach annexed to the obnoxious term Socinian? What is there *invidious*, or *uncharitable* in this insinuation. But, says your correspondent, is it not accusing them of insincerity? I answer, not in the least. They assume a name which *I* not *they* think improper, to avoid an epithet which they deem reproachful, and which certainly does not in any sense apply to them. Greatly as I venerate the memories of those eminent reformers Lælius and Faustus Socinus, I as little relish the appellation Socinian, as any modern Arian can do: and for that reason amongst others, I chuse to call myself an Unitarian. Others may not approve my motive, but I should wonder if I were taxed with insincerity for it.

But I have added, and this I suspect is the offensive part of the charge, that they assume the name "perhaps to save the credit of their orthodoxy, by joining occasionally in the popular hue and cry against those who profess the proper humanity of Jesus Christ." Now, sir, though I have qualified the supposition with the limitation "perhaps," it is possible that my indefinite expression may be understood in a strictly universal sense, as though I had intended to impute this motive to all modern Arians without exception. Whereas I have the pleasure to be acquainted with many, the generosity of whose spirit places them above all suspicion. I must beg leave therefore to correct the text, and to limit my proposition still further, by the insertion of the commodious monosyllable *some;* a word which occurs in some notable instances in your correspondent's letter. Let then the future reading be thus, and *some* perhaps to save their credit, &c. This correction I hope will satisfy the feelings of your correspondent, for I am not inclined altogether to retract the charge which was not made upon light grounds. For indeed to deny that persons of suspected orthodoxy often endeavour to save their credit, by making the most of the little they have, and particularly by loud exclamations, or oblique reflections upon those who are a little below them upon the scale, is to affect ignorance of the most palpable facts. This is not Christian charity, but infantile simplicity: in fact, it is like a child shutting his eyes, and crying out, "nobody can see me." But, says your correspondent, is not this accusing these good men of malevolence? I answer, by no means. They think no ill, and mean no harm to the persons whom they disparage. It is merely an act of self-preservation. They do it only to save their own character; that they may not be turned out of good company, nor lose their good things.

I cannot help suspecting that your correspondent, with all his gravity, means to be a little waggish when he talks of the great degree of *courage* which it requires to avow Arianism in present circumstances. "The Socinians" says he "hold them in contempt." What the Socinians may think or say, I know not. But when your correspondent adds that "the orthodox allow them no better quarter than they do the Socinians," he is telling a tale of other times. I well remember when Arians were held by the orthodox in horror and abhorrence. But the case is altered. We now see them lovingly shaking hands with each other, frequenting the same places of worship, preaching in the same pulpits, supporting the same academical institutions, and eating custard together. The alarm of the common enemy beating up their quarters has converted bitter hostility into close alliance. No, no, there is no great danger now in professing Arianism; no uncommon firmness of mind, no extraordinary self-denial is requisite for this purpose. No youth is excluded from our academies, no minister is dismissed from our pulpits, no tradesman is injured in his business, because he is an Arian. Arianism, sir, is no longer a noxious heresy, it is a *saving grace*, which makes us righteous in the sight of our brethren. A

very little of it will go a great way. If we can but abjure the apostle's creed, that "Jesus Christ is a man in all respects like unto his brethren," there is no insuperable obstacle in our way, to the highest preferment which nonconformity has to bestow. I cannot therefore by any means agree with your correspondent, that it argues weakness of intellect in some modern Arians, to assume and shelter themselves under the auspicious name: nor should I expect in theory, nor do I observe in fact, any *woeful* disappointment in consequence of it.

Your correspondent says, that "*some* impute the opinions of modern Arians, to weakness of intellect," and after acknowledging my courtesy or justice in admitting the right of modern Arians to the title of Unitarians; he adds "that this appellation is by *some* applied exclusively to those who believe that Jesus Christ had no existence before he appeared in this world." I do not suspect the veracity of your correspondent, nor can I suppose that so grave a writer would hazard a random and unfounded assertion. I can only say, that his connexions must have been very peculiar. For I can truly affirm that in the whole circle of my acquaintance, which amongst Unitarians has been pretty extensive, I have never yet met with an individual who avowed, or whom I could suspect of entertaining the sentiments, which your correspondent imputes to *some* whom he has probably known, or heard of.

But hold! To my utter astonishment, I see that I am myself implicated in the charge. Your correspondent adds, as his concludingsentence and *bonne bouche*, "While he (Mr. B.) confined his charge against them to *weakness*, &c. it might be borne in silence." What, sir! did I ever charge those illustrious and venerable men, the Lockes, the Clarkes, the Peirces, the Emlyns, the Taylors, the Bensons and the Chandlers of a former age, my fathers and instructors in the gospel of Christ, to whose admirable writings I am chiefly indebted for all that I know of pure and rational christianity, and by whose example I have been animated to profess it, whose light, bright and resplendent for the season in which it appeared, enabled the Lardners and the Jebbs, the Lindseys and the Priestleys of a later day to see still further into the simplicity and reasonableness of the Christian doctrine, and to remove still more of the rubbish with which its progress is impeded; those great and revered characters whose names I cannot pronounce but with veneration and gratitude; did I, sir, ever whisper a syllable, could I ever entertain a thought of accusing them of "weakness of intellect," merely because they believed and were supporters of the Arian doctrine? It is impossible. Every feeling of my heart revolts at the thought. If I could ever be chargable with such infatuation, well might I adopt the patriarch's imprecation, let my right hand forget her cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

But your correspondent also alleges it as a proof of wonderful moderation that his modern Arians, bear in silence the heavy charge of *prejudice*. Sir, in my humble opinion, all error must be founded in *præjudication*—in

judging and making up the mind upon a subject *before* it has been sufficiently examined. If therefore the system of modern Arians be erroneous, which I think it is, they must, in my estimation, be chargeable with prejudice. Of criminal prejudice I am far from either accusing or suspecting them. And I am yet to learn that the imputation of prejudice to human fallibility is a crime deserving of animadversion. Who that has ever thought at all, has not felt the power of the prejudices of education? Daily am I thankful to the Father of lights and to those angels of his providence, by whom the iron chain of early prejudice was burst asunder, and the doors of the dungeon were set open, by whom I was brought out of darkness into light, out of bondage into liberty, and out of misery into happiness: and by whom I was taught to regard my Maker not as an inexorable tyrant, but as an indulgent Father, and my existence not as a curse, but as an inestimable blessing. Many prejudices no doubt still remain, and so far from quarrelling with any who remind me of these prejudices and rouse my attention to them, I shall ever regard those as my best and kindest friends, by whom one error is corrected, or one truth imparted, or set in a more impressive, and advantageous light.

I have only to remark that your correspondent has given to the system, which he espouses the new title of *modern* Arianism. This I confess surprises me. The advocates for the proper humanity of Christ, though sometimes branded by their adversaries as a modern sect, indignantly reject the charge, and demonstrate, by incontrovertible evidence, that their doctrine is coeval with christianity itself. If antiquity be the mark of a true church, that mark is theirs. But that a person holding a particular system, should himself speak of it as a *modern* hypothesis, and desire to distinguish it by that particular epithet is what I should not have expected. To me it has the appearance of a *felo de se;* and at any rate, it too plainly marks the close affinity of the doctrine so designated to the spurious brood of that mother of abominations, who bears her title and her condemnation upon her brow.

I am Sir,
Your humble Servant,
T. BELSHAM.

P. S. Permit me, sir, by way of Postscript, to make a few observations upon a singular paper in your last Repository, signed "A Churchman."

This gentleman has taken much disinterested and edifying pains to prove that "Unitarians are not rational Christians," and for this purpose he has generously ascribed to them a multitude of tenets, which have as much connexion with Unitarianism as they have with the Georgium Sidus, or the Milky Way.

I would beg leave to inform your correspondent that the only common principles of the Unitarians are these: that Jesus of Nazareth, a man in all respects like to his brethren, who neither possessed nor claimed the attributes of Deity, was a prophet of God, commissioned by him to be a teacher of truth and righteous-

ness, and to reveal the doctrine of eternal life, of which, God hath given assurance to all men by raising Jesus from the dead.

All this must of course appear to your correspondent to be very foolish and absurd. It may however be some satisfaction to him, to learn that the Unitarians in other respects are not so irrational as he imagines. For that as to the doctrines of materialism, necessity, optimism and the like, the majority of Unitarians, are as comfortably ignorant of them, and as violently prejudiced against them as heart could wish, or as any orthodox churchman, real or pretended, can be. But, says your correspondent, "these doctrines, were all entertained by Dr. Priestley, and are *all* supported by Mr. Belsham."—Admitting this broad assertion to be true, what has Unitarianism to do with it? Why are Unitarians to be made responsible for the speculative opinions of one or two individuals? *Me, me, adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum.* The soul that sinneth it shall die. But this equitable principle does not satisfy the righteous zeal of your correspondent. Like another Haman, he scorns to descend to individual revenge, and nothing will satisfy him but the utter extirpation of Unitarianism, root and branch. Your correspondent however little knows the Unitarians if he supposes that they will adopt implicitly any doctrines which their teachers may advance, without examining how far they agree with what they judge to be the dictates of reason, or the discoveries of revelation. And may they ever retain this honourable distinction, this inquisitive and independent spirit, whatever may become either of Dr. Priestley's speculations, or of my own!

After all, even I myself, whom your correspondent has advanced to the honour of being the hero of his new Dunciad, and whom he has been pleased to represent as *ex cathedrâ* dictating or retailing absurdities, for the Unitarian creed, even I, sir, am not quite so irrational as your correspondent may apprehend. Though, ever since I reflected upon the subject, I have always been ready to avow my ignorance of the difference between the bond of union which connects intellectual properties together, and that which combines the essential properties of matter; a problem, the solution of which exceeds, I believe, even your correspondent's sagacity, I can nevertheless assure him that I never did believe any thing like what he and others call materialism, nor have I ever yet been so bereft of reason, as to imagine that thought could rise from the juxta-position of solid logs of inert matter. But as to some other opinions, which, in your correspondent's estimation, involve nonsense and absurdity, I must confess that I am guilty of believing them; and am, as he must think, so *blindly* attached to them, that I do not even wish to call them in question, nor do I think at my time of life, that it would be in the power of his new and blazing philosophy to enlighten my darkness and to convince me of error.

I do believe, and must continue to believe, however absurd it may appear to your correspondent, that the world was made by God, and that it is governed by his most wise and powerful,

and benevolent providence: I do, and must continue to believe, that it is the honour and glory of God to be a necessary agent, to be necessarily wise, holy and good, and that he can no more will or act in contradiction to infinite wisdom, or infinite benevolence, than he can cease to be. Unreasonable as your correspondent may think it, I cannot help feeling a constant and inexpressible satisfaction in the assurance, that I, and all my fellow creatures, live under the auspicious government of OMNIPOTENT BENEVOLENCE. And, under this impression, I remain fully convinced that evil, both natural and moral, bears a very small proportion to good, either in intensity or duration, in the works of God; that while it continues it answers purposes of the highest import, which could not be accomplished in any other or better way; and that in due time it will be entirely exterminated, and all the rational creatures of God will be virtuous and happy. To me, I confess, that it does not appear an incredible thing that God should raise the dead. And, upon the whole, though in the works of God, and in his dispensations to mankind, there are difficulties innumerable, which I cannot explain, and mysteries, which I do not comprehend; I can believe, and triumph in the full, unhesitating conviction, that the universal system of things is the best which infinite benevolence could prompt, which infinite wisdom could contrive, and which infinite power could carry into effect.

If to give entire credit to these pleasing speculations, is to offend against reason, I own that "I am the most offending man alive." To your correspondent, and to the *esprits forts* of the age, all this may, and probably does appear unintelligible and absurd. They, no doubt, think that it is the characteristic of superior wisdom to deny the existence of a God, to ascribe every thing to blind chance, and to the fortuitous concourse of atoms, or to maintain that the Maker of the universe, is an ignorant, impotent being, who would do better if he could; or that he is a powerful and malignant being, who delights in vice and misery. All this may be vastly rational and credible. And they who hold these opinions may be very profound philosophers, very sagacious reasoners, men of very strong and elevated minds, and may have a very great right to sneer at all religion, natural and revealed, and to denounce all who profess it as knaves or fools, but ——— I DO NOT ENVY THEM THEIR FEELINGS.

MR. WINDEATT, ON THE ASTRONOMICAL DEPARTMENT OF DR. REES'S CYCLOPEDIA.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

Totnes, April 17, 1808.

SIR,

As your valuable miscellany is a "Repository of General Literature," as well as of "Theology," I shall be much obliged by your inserting in it the following query,

The new Cyclopedia, now publishing under the superintendence of Dr. Rees, professes to be an improvement on the dictionary of Mr. Chambers, and to contain the various articles of that work. In the astronomical part of Mr. Chambers's Dictionary, under the names of the different constellations, the situation of each star in the heavens is to be found; but in the new Cyclopedia, only the number of the stars according to the different catalogues is given. The stars which have particular names as Betelgeule, Bellatrix, &c. are noticed, but have not their places in the heavens assigned to them; and, as these have not under their proper names, it appears likely that ∂ orionis, and all the tribes of lesser stars, will be equally neglected. But I wish to ask either of your correspondents, if it is intended in any future part of this "national work," to give the situations of all the principal stars?

And here I cannot refrain from thanking Mr. Frend, for the instruction I have received from his excellent publications, entitled "Evenings' Amusements." It was he who first taught me to discern order, amidst the apparent confusion which the heavens nightly present to the eye; and who pointed out to me the most magnificent display of the wisdom and omnipotence of the Creator. I may never have another opportunity of thanking Mr. Frend, and I consider it my duty to do so now. I am Sir,

With the best wishes for the success of your Repository,

Your most obedient Servant,
MILFORD WINDEATT, Jun.

A NEW ARGUMENT IN DEFENCE OF MR. STONE.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, *London, April* 11, 1808.

I rejoice to hear of the favourable turn, which the melancholy business between Mr. Stone, and the good Christians at Doctors' Commons is likely to take. I hear Mr. Stone will be allowed to retain the emoluments without any of the labours, (pray observe, I do not say duties,) of his rectory. This is just as it ought to be.—Here is at least one exception to the general rule, of "no pay, no paternoster," and that too in the established Church of England. With your leave, Mr. Editor, I will very briefly state to you my reason for believing that this accommodating arrangement is exactly proper in all its parts. I think Mr. Stone ought not to be suffered to officiate in the established church, neither in his own person nor by proxy, because he believes that church to be an apostate, idolatrous church, a legitimate daughter of the celebrated Whore of Babylon.—So much has been said on this part of the subject, that I may well be excused the labour of "holding a candle to the sun." To illustrate my reason for believing that Mr. Stone ought nevertheless to live upon the revenues of the established church, I will, with your

permission, tell you a short story. Some few years ago, in the town where I last resided in the country, there was a popular election for one of its municipal officers. The contest was long and spirited,—roast beef, pudding and porter experienced a most rapid consumption, and no money was spared by the candidates in entertaining "the worthy and independent electors." All was activity, hilarity and joy. One of these worthy gentlemen, an elector, was observed to be more than usually happy on this occasion—he enjoyed himself like a true independent freeman during the whole of the week prior to the day of election. And that he might not act like one of your trimmers and drivellers, he honourably espoused the cause of one of the candidates only—*His* ale he drank—*his* roast beef he feasted upon—and *his* favours he sported. This was a jovial season for honest J. G. At length the day and hour of election arrived, and jovial John was called to give his vote; when, lo! to the astonishment of the court, John gave his vote in favour of that very candidate, whose bread and cheese he had never tasted, whose ale he had never drank! Being desired to give his reason for so strange and apparently inconsistent a mode of acting, he boldly replied, turning himself round to his brother freemen, on whose side he had just voted—"Always quarter upon the enemy——Never hurt the man you love!"

I remain your
Constant reader, and
An Occasional Correspondent.

ANECDOTES OF THE LATE REV. DR. R. PRICE, EXTRACTED FROM "THE LIFE OF DR. STILES, PRESIDENT OF YALE COLLEGE, NORTH AMERICA, BY THE REV. A HOLMES, M. A."

"The president and fellows having conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws on the Rev. Dr. Price, [A. D. 1783] in a letter to the President, September 29, he acknowledges the honour with the politeness and modesty which characterized that eminent man." ——"I hope Yale College, over which you preside, will accept my warmest thanks for this testimony of their approbation. I should be one of the happiest of mankind, could I think that the account given of me so handsomely, did not go beyond any merit that I can justly claim. ——The circumstance mentioned in your letter, that the honour done me by the College, was granted me at the same time with General WASHINGTON, has made a greater impression upon me than can be easily conceived. It is a circumstance that makes the honour distinguishing beyond all that my ambition could reach to. General Washington's name must always shine among the first in the annals of the world. It will go down to all generations universally applauded and admired. Mine perhaps may follow; but it will be but a little way, and at a vast distance." P. 287.

Dr. Stiles having delivered a discourse before the convention of the congregational ministers of Rhode Island, assembled at Bristol, "On Christian Union *," which was published at the desire of the ministers, Dr. Price on receiving a copy of it from the author, expressed his sentiments of it in a letter to him, in the following words—"I have been much indebted to the information I received from your sermon on Christian union; I admire the spirit and temper with which it is written. How happy would the Christian Church have been, had all Christians, amidst their different opinions, been actuated by this spirit!" P. 96.

The philosophical apparatus being very incomplete, the Rev. Dr. Lockwood, in 1787, contributed 100*l.* towards its completion. A subscription was circulated, by which 200*l.* more was raised for the same purpose. The President, availing himself of the friendship of Dr. Price, wrote to him for assistance in procuring this apparatus. The Doctor readily complied with the President's request. He purchased an apparatus in London, and carefully attended to the quality of the several articles. The expense, beyond the remittance for this purpose, amounting to 6*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.* was paid by Dr. Price, who obligingly requested the College to accept it, "as a contribution from him," testifying his good will and respect. Mr. B. Vaughan saw to the shipping of the articles, and begged the College to accept of the insurance, freight, commission and shipping charges. On Dec. 24, 1789, the apparatus arrived safely and in excellent order, at New-haven. By a vote of the Corporation, the President expressed to Dr. Price, and Mr. Vaughan, their "most sensible gratitude for their generous liberality and very attentive and kind offices, on this occasion." Appendix, p. 397.

In a note, the author says, "the learned and eminent Dr. Price, died, *March* 19, 1791. Ætat. 68." It ought to be mentioned, that this sensible and liberal writer is a Calvinist, as Dr. Stiles also was.

P. H.

J. M.'s REPLY TO THE CLERGYMAN ON THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST. LETTER IV.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, *London, Nov.* 12, 1807.

We come now to Phil. ii. 6. Here the clergyman opens his attack in his usual manner. "J. M. however," (he says) "with his usual *dogmatical peremptoriness* asserts, that there is nothing in the New Testament, like *Christ's being equal with God the Father.* In proof, that there was *something* like it, I adduced Phil. ii. 6." He rests the proof of the *New*

* The text is Phil. iii. 16.

Testament writers' making this assertion on this single passage; and yet, however dogmatically peremptory my assertion to the contrary may be, he is obliged to admit its truth, for when he gives us his rendering of the passage, having rendered this clause "did not account the being equal with God," he immediately, in a parenthesis, explains away the all-important word *equal*, by rendering it *as*, "the being *equal* with God, or the being *as* God," "The Apostle," he adds, "uses the word ισα *as*, adverbially." If then it is used here *adverbially*, it cannot with propriety be rendered *equal*. That ισα does not mean *equal*, Dr. Whitby has shewn*, even when professedly opposing the Socinian sense of the text, and this he does by referring to a great number of texts, where the word occurs. In many of these passages it is rendered *as*, and in some *like*; but never *equal*. But the clergyman, to make *as* God come as near as he can in sence to *equal* with God, fills up the rest of his parenthesis with, "viz. *on the same footing as God.*" Let any one turn to the passages Dr. Whitby has collected, and give the word *as*, in them, this explanation, and then judge whether it will not "*produce downright nonsense.*"

To give one instance out of many, Job. x. 10. "Hast thou not curdled me ισα τυρω "*upon the same footing as cheese.*" To prove that ισα means *equal*, he cites a passage from Homer, respecting Castor and Pollux which *he* renders, "They have obtained honour *equally* with the gods;" but this passage utterly fails him, for, conscious that *equally*, is not the true rendering of the word ισα, he immediately corrects it by adding, "*or as the gods.*" He then gives *another translation* of the passage in Homer, and again adds the same absurd explanation of the word *as*, which I have before noticed. His words are, "*they are so honoured as to be placed on the same footing as the gods.*" Did Homer when he used the terms "honoured as the gods," mean to say that they really *were gods*? Surely no one will contend for such a construction of his words; how then will that citation prove that, when the Apostle applies the same terms to Jesus Christ, he meant to assert that he was "*God*, equal with God the Father."

"In opposition to J. M." says the clergyman, "I will venture to maintain that our present translation, is the right one." And yet when he professedly gives us what he calls, "*the exact literal translation of the passage*," it differs from the present translation, not only in the instance above noticed, but also in other respects. Now two different translations of the same words, cannot both be right.

I make use of three arguments†, to prove that the rendering of this passage in the common translation, is not the true one; of those arguments, he has not cited, or attempted to refute one single sentence. What he has said *about* them, I shall leave the reader to compare with the arguments themselves

* In loc. † M. Repos. vol. ii. p. 237.

That the present rendering however is not the true one, we have the united testimony of some of our ablest critics, as well Trinitarian as Unitarian. Mr. James Pierce observes, "this" (that is the present rendering) "is so plainly disagreeable to the sense of the phrase, that it has been rejected by Er. Schmidius, Grotius, Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Bull and others, whom no man will suspect of being partial in favour of the notion against which this text is frequently alleged."

"As for J. M.'s probable true rendering of this latter passage," says the clergyman, "it would verily puzzle the whole society of schoolmasters to elicit such a meaning from the original. I have vainly endeavoured to discover the Greek words, which J. M. transmutes into *was not tenacious of retaining that likeness to God.* Woe would have been to me when a school-boy, had I been guilty of any such transmutation." In reply I would say, Woe, woe, woe would have been to me, if in this controversy with the clergyman, I had been guilty of surreptitiously introducing the word "*Jehovah,*" instead of *Elohim*, and "*the world,*" instead of *the heavens and the earth*, into the first verse of Genesis; and then had affirmed from the text so corrupted, "that *Moses* teaches us, *that the world was created by Jehovah.*" Woe would have been to me if I had substituted *Jehovah* for *Adon*, (Mal. iii. 1.) if I had repeatedly affirmed, contrary to truth, and to the clearest evidence, to those who are able to look into the original, that the former and not the latter was the prophet's word, and had built the whole of the argument, in proof of Christ's being Jehovah, upon "so gross a mis-quotation" of the text: "verily," had I done so, I should have been ashamed ever again to have put pen to paper; yet all this the clergyman has been guilty of, and more to the same purpose, as we shall see presently.

Let it not be thought from what I have said, that I mean to accede to the charge, that the rendering I have proposed, is indefensible, and not to be elicited from the original: for the justness of it then, I shall appeal from him, and from his *supposed* society of schoolmasters, to men whose critical knowledge of the Greek, neither he nor they are able to dispute. What has the learned Mr. Wakefield elicited from the original of this passage? His translation is, "Who, though in a divine form, *did not think of eagerly retaining* this divine likeness." His schoolmasters I apprehend, would be puzzled to make out a material difference in sense, between "*was not tenacious of retaining that likeness to God,*" and "*did not think of eagerly retaining this divine likeness.*" What has the learned Mr. Pierce, (before referred to) elicited from it? His paraphrase is, "Who being in the form or likeness of God, *was not eager in retaining that likeness to God.*" In his notes he says, *eager or tenacious*, &c. Dr. Clarke says, "the true rendering is as follows. —'Who being in the form of God, did not covet to be honoured [was not greedy or fond of, did not look upon it as a prize to be hastily catcht at, of being honoured] as God." I might go on; but these authori-

ties are fully sufficient to justify the rendering I propose, and they are such as no man has any reason to be ashamed of.

But now comes (what the clergyman calls) "the most *portentous* part of J. M.'s criticism; a part even more *portentous* than his probable true rendering," upon which he bestows much declamation. And what is this great and mighty charge? Why truly, J. M. has *written* αρπαγμα, but the apostle's word is αρπαγμος. To this charge I most readily acknowledge, that having the word αρπαγμα in my mind, (which is the word used in *all* the quotations made from the Greek writers by commentators, to illustrate the apostle's meaning, except when expressly quoting or referring to the word used by the apostle,) writing in a hurry, and trusting to memory, without turning to the passage, I did inadvertently write the one for the other.

But let us see what all this declamation comes to. Are these words as dissimilar in appearance, in sound, and in sense, as the words *Elohim* and *Jehovah*, and *Adon* and *Jehovah*, which the clergyman writes the one for the other? Or do they so affect the reasoning and argument?

The clergyman says indeed, that the words αρπαγμα and αρπαγμος, have a different meaning. But upon what authority? Does he prove it by comparing this passage, with other passages in the New Testament, where either of the words occurs? That was impossible; for neither of them occurs in any other passage of those writings.

Mr. Pierce says*, "I do not find any instance produced of αρπαγμος as ever used by any author but St. *Paul*, in this place, and such as have taken occasion to treat of it: and so no argument can be brought to confirm any interpretation from the express use of the word. But if αρπαγμα be synonimous to αρπαγμος, as βαπτισμα, is to βαπτισμος, φωτισμα to φωτισμος, μιγμα to μιγμος, αγνισμα to αγνισμος, and many others of the like nature, the proper meaning of it seems to be a *prey* or *booty*, which is of a middle sense, and may be either just or unjust. And so it is used by Josephus, Antiq. lib. xi. c. 5. Hence because a *prey* or *booty*, is what persons readily embrace, and *eagerly retain*, as a thing of which they count it an advantage to be possessed; agreeably to this notion in all the passages produced out of *Heliodorus*, where this word is used, it seems plainly to denote a *fortuitous advantage*, or as we say, a *lucky hit* put into a person's hands, and not to be let slip or parted with." If then, as Pierce and Dr. Whitby, (who has collected the passages from *Heliodorus*) suppose, the words αρπαγμα and αρπαγμος are synonimous, the inadvertently writing the former for the latter, has neither affected the sense of the passage, nor weakened the force of the argument.

After all, I do not assert that αρπαγμα is the apostle's word. I merely say †, "the word αρπαγμα does not mean *robbery*, but a *prize*." The clergyman says ‡, that "it signifies *prey* or *booty*."

* In loc. † M. Repos. vol. ii p 237.
‡ M. Repos. vol. ii. p. 526.

The only question then is, whether the word αρπαγμος is not a word equivalent to it? The clergyman says it is not. In addition to the authorities already quoted to shew that it is, I shall add that of Archbishop Newcome, who renders the clause, "Did not esteem it a *prey* to be like God." And in his notes he says, "Wakefield shews from Eustathius, that according to the genius of the Greek language, αρπαγμος, is equivalent to αρπαγμα."

Having produced such authorities in support of my rendering of the passage, and to shew that αρπαγμα and αρπαγμος are equivalent, I leave the clergyman to enjoy his triumph.

But, exclaims the clergyman, "Surely we live in an *annus mirabilis* of criticism, no less than of politics. But, unless I greatly mistake, the text in question not only proves the *equality* of Christ with the Father," which, as we have seen, he himself has sufficiently proved that it does not; "but likewise," he adds, "(what necessarily follows from such *equality*) his proper divinity." But if the former is not true, the consequence resulting from its *supposed truth*, has no foundation.

"Christ," says the clergyman, "is said to be in *the form* of God, and to take upon himself *the form of a servant*. Now if the *taking upon him the form of a servant*, denote *his becoming a man in the lowest order of society*, *his being in the form of God* must, by every analogy of language, denote *his being God:* for what right has J. M. to understand the two evidently parallel and contrasted phrases, *the form of God*, and *the form of a servant*, differently?"

That this is a mere begging of the question, I shall not content myself with asserting; but shall prove, by shewing that the phrase, being in *the form of a servant*, does not mean *to be a servant*, and that being in *the form of God*, does not mean *to be God*. Jesus Christ says to his disciples, "I am among you as one that *serveth*," but he also says to them, "Call no man *master* upon earth, for one is your *master*, even Christ." Was he then really *a servant?* Does he not assert the contrary? When *he took on him the form of a servant* by laying aside his garment, girding himself with a towel and washing his disciples' feet, the most servile office to which he could submit, did he in reality become their *servant?* Hear what he himself says upon that occasion, "Ye call me *master* and *lord:* and ye say well: for so I am. If I then, your *lord* and *master* have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." If *to take the form of a servant*, means *to become a servant;* to be *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, must, "by every analogy of language," mean *to be sinful flesh*, but this cannot be admitted. To take *the form of a servant* then, cannot mean to become a servant. So on the other hand, *to be in the form of God*, cannot mean *to be God;* for we all know that, that which is in the form or likeness, or is the image of any thing, is not that thing in the form or likeness of which, or the image of which it is. "God said, let us make man *in our image, after our likeness*,

——So God created man *in his own image*, in the image of God, created he him." If then to be *in the form of God*, will prove Christ *to be God*, to be *in the likéness of God*, as applied to mankind, will prove every man *to be God;* for so universally does James apply this being made in the likeness of God, when he says of the tongue, "Therewith curse we *men*, *which are made in the similitude of God.*" So far therefore are these phrases from proving, what the clergyman cites them to prove, that they prove directly the reverse.

"He" (that is J. M. says the clergyman,) "complains grievously of my altering and misrepresenting the common translation; not citing its real expressions, and adducing as its assertions, what it nowhere contains." Whether this complaint be just or not, the reader will judge. The justness of it however, will be confirmed almost immediately, by a quotation from the clergyman, in which a sentence of only four words in the common translation, is *misquoted*, and misrepresented three or four times successively.

"Two remaining passages of the New Testament, he (J. M., says the clergyman,) allows to be cited by me in its real language, and he moreover allows them to relate to Christ; but he denies that they contain any thing like an assertion, that Christ is God." Is there then *any thing like* such an *assertion* in them? Yes, says the clergyman, "the title of king of kings, lord of lords, *seems* to me, far too high a one, to have been ever applied by an inspired writer to a mere man." I reply, that title is with the strictest propriety applied, by the inspired writer, to *him* whom "*God has made* higher than the kings of the earth, *made* both *Lord* and Christ, and *given* him *a name above every name*, that in *his* name every knee should bow, and every tongue confess, that *he is Lord*, to the glory of God the Father." But I still deny that, that title contains in it (whatever it may *seem* to the clergyman to contain) any thing like an *assertion* that *Christ is God.*

"J. M." (says the clergyman,) "allows that it is applied to Christ. But St. John tells us, that it is the title of the *Word of God.*" Surely this is an oversight of the clergyman, for to be consistent with what immediately follows he should have said, *of God the Word.*

He proceeds, "therefore J. M. must allow, that *the word* of God is Christ. But St. John *tells us*, that the word of God *is* God. Therefore J. M. must either allow, that Christ *is* God, or deny that Christ *is* the word. He allows however, that Christ is the word. He must allow therefore, that when *John says* the word *is* God, he in fact *says* Christ *is* God." This is the passage to which I before referred, in which the short sentence, "the word *was* God," is so repeatedly misquoted. Had the clergyman been able indeed to shew that John, or any one of the sacred writers, had *asserted* that, the word *is* God, or that Christ *is* God, he would have made a discovery for which trinitarians would have immortalized his name; but no such *assertion* is to be found in the sacred writings. Trinitarians indeed, as well as the clergyman,

frequently make the *assertion*, and palm it upon the inspired writers, but the intelligent reader of the scriptures will easily detect the fraud.

But the clergyman produces a text, (1 John, v. 20.) in which he says, "St. John himself says of *the son, Jesus Christ, this is the true God.*" He should have told us *whose* son Jesus Christ is here said to be. Let us however look at the passage; the whole verse is, "and we know that *the son of God* is come; and hath given us an understandimg, that we may know *him*," (that is God, comp. John, vii. 28. xvii. 3. 6. 21.) that is true: and we are in him, (God) that is true, in, or through his (God's) son Jesus Christ. *This* (that is God that is true) *is the true God and eternal life.*" But to this the clergyman will undoubtedly object, that "the antecedent to *his* son Jesus Christ, is not *father*, but *God*;" and "that that God, is Jesus Christ;" and his paraphrase will be, "and we know that the son of God (that is, the son of Jesus Christ) is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him, (that is Jesus Christ,) that is true; and we are in him (that is in Jesus Christ,) that is true; in, or through his (that is Jesus Christ's) son, Jesus Christ." And then will come in, with full force and energy, his exposition of the last clause, "this, (that is, he that is true, Jesus Christ, whom the son of God (that is the son of Jesus Christ,) hath given us an understanding to know, and in whom we are, through his son Jesus Christ,) this Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life," see before on 1 John, iii. 5. Let the reader receive this interpretation if he can. Does not this furnish another instance of the "most gross misquotation," and perversion of scripture?

But what follows is, if possible, a still more "daring misquotation," and perversion of scripture. With respect to the other title, "alpha and omega, the first and the last," the clergyman says, (referring to Rev. i. 11, 17,) "The *voice*, that John heard, was the *voice* of the son of man, of him that liveth and was dead; the *voice* therefore of Christ. St. John consequently heard *Christ declare himself to be alpha* and omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending, *which was, and which is, and which is to come, the Almighty.*" The words, "*which was, and which is, and which is to come, the Almighty,*" are not said to be uttered by that voice. They are taken from the 8th verse, which is not the words of Christ. I have shewn *, by comparing that verse with the 4th, that those words are a periphrasis of the Father exclusively. This the clergyman admits; ("for," he says, "in that case, after the apostle had styled (ver. 8,) the divine Being, alpha and omega, the beginning and the ending, he afterwards *similarly* styles Christ, alpha and omega, the first and the last, (ver. 11. 17.)" In which quotation he suppresses the latter clause of the 8th verse, (upon which the whole argument rests;) yet notwithstanding all this, he unites those words in the latter clause

* M. Repos. vol ii. p. 238.

of ver. 8, with a part of the 17th verse, and affirms them to be the words of Jesus Christ, and that in them, Jesus Christ declares himself to be *the Almighty.*

I observed that the terms "alpha and omega, the first and the last," were applied to the divine Being in an *absolute* sense, and to Jesus Christ in a *relative* sense. This the clergyman calls *a quibble.* I attempted to illustrate the observation, and also to prove by the most clear and direct evidence, that appellations said to belong exclusively to the divine Being, are nevertheless applied in the scriptures to mere men. This illustration, and this proof, are likewise entirely suppressed by the clergyman. Is an observation answered or refuted by calling it *a quibble*, while the evidence by which its truth is supported, is studiously kept out of sight?

I shall not conclude this reply, like the clergyman, with a sweeping clause containing charges of "daring misquotations, &c. &c." unaccompanied by any evidence of their truth; fully persuaded, that enough has been said, to make those charges recoil upon the head of him by whom they are exhibited with accumulated weight.

I leave unnoticed the *cause* he assigns for not answering my other two letters, from a conviction, that no one can believe it to be the true one.

I beg pardon, Mr. Editor, for obtruding upon your patience and that of your readers so long a reply to the clergyman's second letter,

And am your's,

J. M.

BLAETTER DER VORZEIT, OR LEAVES OF ANTIQUITY; FROM THE GERMAN OF HERDER.

These poetic fictions, were published by Herder, in his "Scattered Leaves." They are thus introduced by him.

"I met with the 'fictions from oriental legends,' in a way in which I should not have sought for them; principally in the study of the oriental languages, in their tales and commentaries. Here I often met with an image, a simile, a fiction, which was to me, what the juniper bush was to the prophet in the wilderness; a poor shrub in itself, but it gave him shade and strengthened him. Or, to speak without image, I often found in the oriental legends, absurd as they frequently appear, ideas so poetical, that they seemed to solicit a better execution; and it was hard for me not to extract them, and, in my leisure hours, give them a new form according to my taste. Let no one confound these fictions with the histories of the bible; they are thoroughly apocryphal; either ancient fables of various oriental people, or plants which have sprung from seeds of that kind. Their execution is almost entirely mine; but few are left, as they stand in the tradition. (For instance, Abraham's childhood—and the staff of the prophet.) But all are founded in legends, and the more they rest on such le-

gends, the more an oriental spirit predominates in these imitations, the more they attain their end. We find in them a continuation of the tales of our infancy; these fictions coalesce with what we heard when young, filling up as it were, the outline and sketch of celebrated places and persons. To the due perusal and enjoyment of these oriental fables or idyls, we must bring back in some measure, our simple and child-like sentiments."

1. *The Leaves of Antiquity.*

My youthful spirit wandered in the grove of ancient sayings, and arrived at the gate of paradise. "What dost thou seek here, mortal?" said the splendid, wondrous figure, which guarded the holy garden, the glory of whom was tempered, and, instead of the fiery sword, he held a palm-branch in his hand. "I seek the most ancient abode of my race," said I, "the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge, and those blessed meads, in which the father of men was taught child-like wisdom, from all the living of the earth, and from the Elohim himself."

"Paradise is faded," said the friendly cherub, "the tree of life is planted in a higher and immortal garden, and the tree of knowledge blossoms among all the people of the earth. But thou shalt become acquainted with my form, and in it shalt hear the voice of all the living." He said, and touched me with his branch, and ascended more glorious in the air.

How splendid was the figure my eyes now beheld! What voices of creation were heard, by my newly-opened ear! All the living of the earth, and the kings of its families, eagle and ox, man and lion, bore the throne of the Eternal; it was one glory, one song of praise, one restless motion. Whither the eagle flew, thither panted the ox, thither turned the roaring lion, and man, their friendly sovereign and youngest brother. It was the priest of nature, who bore the sacrifices, and the voices of all, before the throne of the Eternal, and who rolled the holy chariot of creation.

And behold, the cherub stood again before me, in milder splendour. The branch of the palm fell from his hand, its leaves were the unfading leaves of ancient tradition. "Receive them," said the cherub, "read them, and impart them to thy brethren." The vision vanished, and I awoke.

I obey the command of the angel, who unites in himself all the voices of creation, and who has survived each degenerate race of mankind. May the language of ancient days be on my lips, may my child-like sayings breathe the breath of the branch of paradise!

2. *The Sun and the Moon.*

Daughter of beauty! beware of envy. Envy drove angels from heaven; envy obscured the beautiful moon, benign mistress of the night.

The creating word issued from the counsel of the Almighty. "Let two lights shine in the firmament, as sovereigns of the earth, as arbitrators of rolling time."

He said, and it was so. The sun arose, the first light. He

stood clothed in the glory of God, like a bridegroom who leaves his chamber in the morning; like a warrior, rejoicing in his course. A wreath of all colours encircled his head; the earth triumphed, its herbs sent forth odours, its flowers adorned themselves.

The other light stood, envious, and saw that it could not surpass this glory. "Why are there two sovereigns on one throne," said she? "Why am I the second, and not the first?"

And suddenly, driven away by inward grief, her beauteous light vanished. It fled far away in the heavens, and became the host of stars.

And Luna stood ashamed before the heavenly beings, pale as a lifeless body; she wept aloud, "Have mercy on me, Father of the universe! have mercy on me."

And the angel of the Lord stood before the eclipsed moon, and spake to her the words of holy destiny. "Because thou hast envied the light of the sun, thou shalt henceforth borrow thy light from him; and when yonder earth steps between you, thou shalt remain in part, or altogether, eclipsed as now."

"But weep not, child of error, thy Maker has forgiven thee thy offence, and changed thy punishment into a blessing. 'Go to the penitent,' said he, 'and tell her, that she, in her glory, shall be mistress of the night, and queen of the stars. I will turn the tears of her repentance into balsam, which shall quicken the thirsty, and animate those with new strength, whom the beam of the sun has enfeebled.'"

Luna, consoled, turned away from the angel of the Lord; and behold that mild splendour surrounded her, with which she still shines; and she began the silent course she still follows. Weeping her offence, she seeketh those she may refresh; she seeketh those she may comfort.

Daughter of beauty! beware of envy. Envy drove angels from heaven; envy obscured the beautiful moon, benign mistress of the night.

3. *The Child of Mercy.*

As the Almighty was about to create mankind, he assembled in council the angels of his attributes, the highest guardians of his empire, around his secret throne.

"Do not create him," said the angel of *Justice*, "he will act unjustly towards his brethren, unmercifully and cruelly towards the weak."

"Do not create him," said the angel of *Peace*; "he will moisten the earth, with human blood; the first born of his race will slay his brother."

"He will defile thy sanctuary with lies," continued the angel of *Truth*, "though thou shouldst set on his forehead, thy own image, the seal of veracity."

Thus spake the angels of the attributes of Jehovah, when *Mercy*, the youngest and most beloved child of the eternal Father, approached his throne and embraced his knee. "Form him, Father," said she, "in thy image, the favourite of thy mercy and goodness. When all thy servants abandon him, I will seek him and support him, and change

his faults to goodness. As he is weak, he will turn his heart to compassion and to mercy towards the more weak. When he strays from peace and truth, when he offends equity and justice; the consequences of his error shall gently lead him back, and meliorate him."

The Father of the universe heard her, well pleased, and formed man, a creature faulty and weak, but in his very offences a disciple of Mercy, the son of a loving spirit, which never deserts him, and ever ennobles him.

Remember thy origin, man, when thou art unjust, and hard towards others; Mercy alone has chosen thee. Love and compassion alone, have offered thee the maternal bosom.

4. *Sammael.*

When God had created man, and put on the perishable dust the crown of his image, he shewed him to the angels and all his creatures. The heavenly host saluted him with reverence, as their younger brother, and served him with joy at the paradisiacal festival.

One of them alone, the haughty Sammael, scorned him, and would not serve him. "I was not" said he, "created from the dust, but was formed of light. The fiery stream which flows around the throne gave me being, not the crumbling dust of the earth."

And behold, the stream of light which dwelt in him departed from him; the splendour of the garment which adorned him, melted away like snow. The proudest of the angels appeared now the meanest among them; for the power had abandoned him which was not his own.

Filled with anger, he silently left the heavenly host, and threatened revenge on innocent man. "Since through you I am made miserable," said he, "I will in return effect your destruction." He had heard of the command, which forbade him the enjoyment of the fruit of the pernicious tree, and resolved to seduce him, in his own splendid angelic figure. But the snow melted away, with which he attempted to make himself a garment; and as he went the way of the seducer, he could not appear otherwise than in the form of the serpent. And of the splendid seraph nought remained but gaudy colours. Eve saw him, admired him, and was seduced by him. She ate death from the tree, and gave it to her husband; misery and disease spread themselves over the families of the earth. The Father of men appeared, and judged the seduced with mercy; but he punished severely the seducing serpent, and cursed it as the most detested reptile of the earth. "As it was thy joy," said he to Sammael, "to create misery, so shall the joy of malevolence be thy wretched portion." He banished him from the host of the blessed, and instead of his former blissful occupation in heaven, Sammael became now—the abhorred *angel of death.*

5. *The Bird of immortal Truth.*

In the midst of Paradise stood two wondrous trees; the tree of knowledge, and the tree of life. Man was allowed to eat of this, but was forbade to taste of that, on account of his infancy. The Phœnix alone, then the king of the feathered race, built his nest in these branches, and ate of their immortal, divine fruit.

Eve came thither, longing to taste of the fruit, when the feathered testimony of truth raised his voice terribly from the tree, and prophesied thus: "Thou victim of deceit, whither art thou erring? To behold what, dost thou open thy eyes? Will'st thou become wise by seeing that thou art naked? Will'st thou become a goddess by feeling thyself poor?" But Eve's looks were fixed on the deceiving fruit, and on her cunning deceiver; she disobeyed the command of the Lord, and listened not to the prophetic voice of the bird.

When death came upon all creatures, the phœnix was set apart, that he might, to eternal ages, be the innocent witness of paradise. But he was compelled with the seduced pair, and with all the living, to abandon the seat of innocence. He would no longer be king of the birds, who were now become hostile to each other, and his former peaceful and happy throne was now ascended by a bird of prey, the blood-thirsty eagle. Immortality also could not be given him, in the now impoisoned and more thick atmosphere of the earth, but in the way of transformation: but by a transformation, which succeeded only after the lapse of centuries, and then gloriously and rapidly restored him to his pristine youth. When his hour approaches he is allowed to fly into paradise, he breaks the old dry branches from the tree of life and the tree of knowledge, in the flame of which his limbs are dissolved. The branches from the tree of wisdom bring him death, the flame from the tree of life restores him to his youth. He then retires again into the wilderness, and mourns over the loss of Paradise. He, the most beautiful, solitary, seldom-seen, and still more seldom-heeded, bird of immortal truth.

6. *The Death of Adam.*

Adam was nine hundred and thirty years old, as he felt in his limbs the sentence of his Judge, *Thou shalt die the death.* "Let all my sons stand before me," said he to the afflicted Eve, "that I may once more see them, and bless them." And they all came at the word of their father, many hundred in their number, and they wept and prayed for his life.

"Which among ye" said Adam, "will go to the holy mountain? Peradventure he may find mercy for me, and bring me fruit from the tree." And each of his sons offered himself, and Seth the most pious of them all, was selected by the father to make the journey.

With his head covered with ashes, he hastened, and did not tarry till he stood before the gate of paradise. "Let him find mercy," so prayed he," O thou merciful, and send my father fruit from the tree of life." And the angel of the Lord stood on a sudden before him, like a shining cherub, but he held instead of the fruit of the tree of life, a three-leaved branch in his hand. "Bear it to thy father," said he, benignly, "as his last refreshment: for eternal life is not for him on this earth. Therefore tarry not by the way, for his hour is come."

Swiftly as an angel of consolation Seth hastened to his father, and he threw himself before him, and said, "O father, I bring thee not fruit from the

tree of life, but the angel of the Lord hath given me this branch, as thy last refreshment." And the dying Adam took the branch, and rejoiced. He smelt on it the perfume of paradise; and his soul was raised by it. "My children," said he, "eternal life doth not dwell for us on this earth: I die, and ye shall follow me: but on this plant, I breathe the breath of another world; I smell the perfume of an higher paradise:" and his eye became dim, and his spirit passed from him, upon the branch of the tree of life.

Adam's children buried their father, and wept for him thirty days; but Seth wept not. He planted the branch on his father's grave, and called it the branch of the new life, of the resurrection from the sleep of death.

And the small branch grew, and became a lofty tree, and all the children of Adam strengthened themselves on it, with the consolation of the other life. It thus passed down to the following generations. It blossomed beautifully in the garden of David, till his foolish son, began to doubt of immortality; the branch then withered, but its blossoms came among other people. And as it came to pass that the teacher of immortality gave up his holy life upon a trunk of this tree, behold, there streamed from it the perfume of resurrection, among all the nations of the earth.

(To be continued.)

LETTERS TO MR. (NOW BISHOP) BURGESS, ON THE TESTIMONY OF THE JEWS TO THE PERSON OF CHRIST. LETTER IV.

SIR,

I have proved, I think, that the term, son of God, does not in itself denote, that the person honoured by such a title is equal to God. I shall now examine in what sense the Jews, the cotemporaries of Christ, understood it.

But, previous to this inquiry, it will be necessary to determine, what degree of authority is to be given to their testimony. Are we to give credit to all their assertions? Then we must believe that Christ was a madman, a blasphemer, in league with the devil, a deceiver, a Samaritan, worthy of death. Are we to pay no credit to any assertions of his cotemporaries? Then we should do injustice to several of them, who declared Jesus to be the son of David, a prophet of Nazareth, the son of God: a good man, the lamb of God, the chosen of God, the king of Israel, the saviour of the world.

From this difference of testimony, it is manifest, that we cannot receive implicitly every thing advanced by the cotemporaries of Christ. Their evidence is strictly to be searched: and, as in a court of justice, where it is found dictated by passion or prejudice, to be rejected. In the case before us at present, we have no difficulties of this sort to encounter: the same language is used by both the friends and foes of Christ; by our Saviour himself, and by his apostles.

We have only to examine what sense they put on their own words; and in what they all agree we can have no objection to acquiesce.

It is certain, from the histories of these times, that the Jews were, at the coming of Christ, in expectation of some great person, supposed to be marked out in their ancient prophecies, to deliver Israel from the yoke under which they groaned, and to render them a great and flourishing people. It does not appear, that they had any idea of God coming down from heaven, and dwelling among them, (a usual fable of the heathens,) in a human form. We shall understand easily what ideas they had of this person, by considering the language, previous to his coming and after it, of those who spoke of the Messiah to come, and those who declared or denied Jesus to be that Messiah.

Certain Magi came to Jerusalem, to inquire after him, who was born king of the Jews. Herod not much pleased with this new competitor, and by this term understanding the Christ, who was then so much expected, sent to the priests to learn the place where Christ was to be born. They answer, that the governor of Israel should be born at Bethlehem. Herod hearing this, sent soldiers to destroy the new-born infant. I do not stop now to enter into the merits of this history, whether it is to be ranked among the pious legends, of which Christians have, in all ages, been remarkably fond; or to be esteemed of equal authority, with the rest of the evangelical writings. The only use I mean to make of it is this; that, if it is a true history, it shews us, that the people of Jerusalem expected a king, or governor, and that Herod had no idea of an infant God, or he would not have sent to murder him. If it is a forged history, it is certainly very ancient; and the writer would naturally adopt the language of the times: and the same conclusion is to be drawn from it.

Zacharias, Simeon, Anna, allude only to a great deliverer, the redeemer of the Jews. And they do not seem to have had any idea of his being different from his fellow creatures, except in the dignity of his character.

That the Jews had no idea of their Messiah differing in nature from other men, is clear from the doubts they entertained respecting John. For when John had performed no miracles to distinguish himself, and preached only repentance, many thought him the Christ, and a committee of priests and levites was sent to find out his character. John himself pointed out Jesus to the Jews, as a man among them mightier than himself, who was the lamb of God, the beloved son of the Father.

The titles, indiscriminately used by all parties, when speaking of Christ, are these: the Christ the son of David, the king of the Jews, the king of Israel, the chosen of God, the son of God, the son of the most high God, the son of the Blessed. There was no difficulty in our Saviour's time, in the meaning of these terms: the contest was to whom they should be applied: and, as it is evident that no one could understand the former part of these

terms, to denote a distinction of nature, it is incumbent on those, who imagine that there is such a distinction marked out in the three last, to determine on what it is founded.

The high priests had no idea of this distinction, when they asked him, whether he was the son of the living God—the son of the Blessed; for they only wanted to make an accusation against him, for pretending to be, what they thought him not to be, the son of God—the king of Israel. The Jews, who mocked at our Saviour on the cross, laugh at him, for having pretended to be the son of God, the king of Israel: and the centurion who, seeing the convulsions of the earth, at the time that Jesus expired, could have no other idea, than that he was a man highly beloved of God, and the person, to whom the term son of God, which he had heard so often from the Jews, ought to be applied.

The apostle Peter uses the same language as the high priests, when he declares his belief, that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God. But that neither he, nor the apostles, understood by the term, a being equal to God, is evident, because they all along expected a temporal kingdom; and at the death of Christ, two of them speak the language of the rest, that he was really a great prophet, and that they did expect him to have been the redeemer of Israel.

Should a doubt still remain in your mind, on the meaning of this term, give me leave to remove it entirely by the words of our Saviour. He had been accused by the Jews of making himself God. His answer is remarkable: "If I had appropriated to myself the term God, it would have been excuseable; for this term is applied in scripture to those men, to whom, like myself, the word of God came: but I did not say that I was God. I said only, that I was the son of God." Hence it is evident, that the term son of God is inferior to God, a title which had been given to men; and therefore Christ himself entirely contradicts your position, that by calling himself son of God, he professed himself to be God and equal with God.

I remain,

THE YORKSHIRE CLERGYMAN'S REPLY, TO "A LAYMAN," ON SUBSCRIPTION TO THE 39 ARTICLES.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

Sheffield, Feb. 8, 1808.

MR. EDITOR,

Your correspondent, "a Layman," (M. Repos. for Jan. vol. iii. p. 28.) is surely in jest when he attempts to explain the different obligations a clergyman is subject to, by subscribing the articles, and by receiving ordination.—"The subscriber," (says he) "by fixing his name down in writing, testifies only, that at that time *he assents* to the 39 articles: he does not say, he believes them."

Very true, he does not in so many words say this, but he knows the bishop expects he should do so. —He knows too, that if he was to avow this mean, Jesuitical distinction, between assenting and believing, he would be instantly refused ordination, and be declared incapable, as he certainly would be unworthy, to officiate as a clergyman of the church of England.

Indeed the layman is obliged to acknowledge this, for he tells us that "subscription is a requisite to ordination, or the acceptance of a living."—If then a candidate for holy orders, and one who hopes to enjoy the emoluments of a living, must previously subscribe and declare his assent and consent, to the 39 articles, how uncandid is it to assert, that notwithstanding these solemn obligations, he may play the hypocrite, and attempt to impose not only upon the bishop, but even upon his conscience and his God! The obvious truth is, that having previously subscribed the articles *ex animo*, as believing them to be agreeable to the word of God, he engages at his ordination, "that he will make the word of God, the rule of his preaching;" exemplifying and explaining it, agreeably to the articles he has subscribed, which he holds to be a just and orthodox commentary thereof. Subscription, therefore, is not that light, trifling or unmeaning ceremony, which the layman describes; but on the contrary, is a most serious matter, and one of the chief corner-stones of the church, not to be removed without injuring the whole fabric. It implies, that the subscriber believes the articles to be agreeable to the word of God. It is the only mode which the church has appointed for admission to her public teaching, or to a participation of her emoluments. By it she asserts that her articles exhibit a comprehensive summary of her faith, and that she maintains this faith to be consonant and agreeable to the holy scriptures. The distinction therefore which the layman attempts to make, between the obligations severally resulting from subscription and ordination are futile, and totally unfounded by the constitution of our church. 'Tis true, (as the layman says) the bishop requires the candidate to declare that he will make the scriptures the rule of his preaching; but it is equally true, that if, in the course of examination, the bishop happens to discover that the party does not also believe the 39 articles are agreeable to the word of God, ordination will be refused. If this were not the case,—if a mere general avowal of belief in the scriptures, would authorize candidates to apply for ordination, the church would, of course, be as open to the teachers among the methodists or dissenters, as she is to her own acknowledged sons,—for which of the former would refuse his full consent to the truth of the scriptures! Assure him that "he is not in the *least bound* by his subscription to the articles, where *he thinks* scriptural truth to interfere," and the great difficulty will be removed. Methodism and nonconformity, of course, must cease: whether the church of England would not cease too, is no difficult matter to determine.

If these arguments have no weight, I would then ask the layman, why did two thousand clergymen leave the church, in consequence of the act of uniformity! certainly not one of them would have refused to engage to make "the scriptures the rule of his preaching." But they were honest, conscientious, though perhaps mistaken men, and disdained to impose upon their bishops, with distinctions fabricated at *St. Omers*, and only calculated for the convenience of impostors and knaves. Unlike our modern discontents, they could agree in the main to the doctrines of the church, though they could not to her ceremonies, and they knew that the nature of her constitution was such, that she could no more dispense with the one, than the other. When therefore they objected to the sign of the cross in baptism, to the ring in marriage, to the surplice in the reading desk, to the consecrating of churches and cemeteries, or to any other ceremonies appointed and rendered indispensable by the church; they were sensible that they thereby as effectually precluded themselves from it, as if they had denied the Athanasian creed itself. Little did these honest men think of remaining in the church, and enjoying its temporalities, whilst they were at the same time boldly preaching against her, as enjoining ceremonies and professing doctrines repugnant to the holy scriptures. No! they were too upright and consistent to practise such tergiversation! instead of sheltering themselves under the ambiguity of a general declaration of their belief in the holy scriptures, or in a fraudulent, immoral distinction between their assent and belief, they magnanimously resigned their livings; in consequence of which faithful acquiescence to the dictates of conscience, (though perhaps rather erroneous,) they are deservedly held up as objects of imitation to all honest men in the like circumstances. It is obvious too, that if they left the church in consequence of their disapprobation of her ceremonies, those who disapprove her doctrines are under additional obligations to follow the example. A clergyman might hesitate at, or occasionally omit the sign of the cross without being guilty of hypocrisy; but when a professed Unitarian mounts the reading desk, and boldly reads the prayers which are drawn up on the Trinitarian hypothesis, he is in fact worse than an infidel.

A clergyman cannot but know, that whilst he officiates in the church, he is bound to conform alike to her doctrines and ceremonies, according to the explication of them, which she has set forth in her articles and canons. No choice is left, no demur is admissible! conform or resign, is her emphatical mandate! and though, for reasons peculiar to the singularly awful times in which we live, she often connives at the disobedience of her children, her principles are invariably the same as they were when she was first established.

Your's,

CLER. EBOR.

P. S. The layman writes about Act-of-Parliament-Christians,—he must know that the church is protected by acts of parliament,

and that she often calls herself the church by law established. Now the layman is respectfully called upon, to point out any clause in the act of uniformity, or any other of the acts alluded to, by which his opinion can be sanctioned, that a subscription to the articles, is rendered next to a mere nullity by a subsequent promise to the bishop, that the party ordained, will make the scriptures the rule of his preaching? If the layman succeeds in this task, he may plume himself upon having made a discovery which had escaped the notice of all our former commentators and controversial writers on the 39 articles; none of whom ever ventured to assert, that a clergyman, "is not in the least bound by his subscription to the articles, where he thinks scriptural truth to interfere."

MR. SEVERN TO MR. A. FULLER; ON THE ALLEGED INDIFFERENCE AND AVERSION OF "SOCINIANS," TO CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

For the Monthly Repository.

To the Rev. Andrew Fuller,

SIR, *Hull, April 29*, 1808.

I have observed, that you are much in the habit of treating those, whose religious opinions differ from your own, sans ceremonie; I shall for once follow the same course. I do this by proposing to you a plain question, which stares a man in the face, as soon as it is brought in view. On what authority, sir, do you assert that the Unitarians, whom you call, doubtless with an intention of shewing your respect, *Socinians*, are inimical to missionary undertakings, for the propagation of Christianity in heathen nations, and more particularly to the mission in the East Indies, under the direction of the Baptist missionary society? This strange position you have attempted to establish, in the beginning of the *second part* of your "*Apology*;" saying, amongst other things, "the cause of our opponents is favoured in most of the Socinian publications, and they are happily united in their wishes for government not to tolerate evangelical religion." The mode in which you set about the proof, or illustration of your crimination, is not a little curious. Messrs. Twining, Scott, &c. who are the *opposers* of the East Indian mission, have made use of the term *evangelical*, as applied to certain doctrines and their preachers, with marks of ridicule or disapprobation. A recent publication, written by a barrister, entitled "Hints on Evangelical Preaching," treats the term in the same style. Say you, not telling us by what means you discovered him in his anonymous guise, "the author is a Socinian dissenter." What follows? Since the barrister scouts the epithet *evangelical*, in the same manner as is done by the opposition writers, in the East India mission affair—*Therefore*, the Socinians as a body, are unfavourable to any

measures being taken for the conversion of the heathen. What a rare specimen of logical acumen, and of *demonstration* ad libitum! This is the species of argumentation by which, according to the legendary tale, the monk was successful in confuting, at least in confusing the devil. As confident assertion appears to be with you a favourite figure of speech, I will indulge you in my turn, by averring that the Unitarians are not averse from missionary undertakings; but are as friendly disposed to them, as any other denomination of professing Christians. If they have not themselves set any foreign mission on foot, the omission may be accounted for, from the paucity of their number, and the want of means to execute a plan of that nature; rather than from indifference to the interests of the gospel, and a deficiency in the principle of benevolence, towards those of their species who are labouring under the direful effects of stupid idolatry and cruel superstition. They earnestly pray for the success of those, "who have gone out unto the heathen," and sincerely rejoice in any instance, which comes to their knowledge, of divine truth being disseminated, with the prospect, however distant, of a glorious harvest, and of "the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, being glorified" in the actual obedience of some individuals to the *faith*.

The Unitarians indeed, in common with many other religious bodies, may have supposed, that several of the late missions have not been undertaken with discretion. They do not see any beneficial effects, which are likely to arise from preaching the gospel to *savages*, previously to the attempting of their civilization. The example of the Quakers, with respect to the American Indians, they consider as the line which ought to be pursued in these benevolent enterprizes. To the main principle however, that it is the duty of Christians to endeavour to propagate their religion in Pagan and Mahometan countries, by all well-adapted measures, I know not a single Unitarian who objects. The mission to the East Indies, under the direction of the Baptist society, has been spoken of by them in terms of high approbation. They conceive the people of that country to be in a state of civilization and mental improvement, which warrants the evidences and doctrines of the gospel being laid before them, with a rational hope of being duly examined and ultimately credited.

As a proof that such really are the ideas of the Unitarians, on the East Indian mission, I would refer you to the approbation with which it is mentioned, and the recommendation to support that is given it, in a late number of the *Monthly Repository**: A periodical publication, that I presume you will not be disposed to question, may be considered as the organ by which the sentiments of the Unitarian community are decidedly announced. You will therefore, I hope, be inclined to withdraw an assertion, which has, it seems, been hazarded more as the consequence of a settled prejudice, that prompts you to suppose Unitarians can nei-

* Vol. II. p. 559—561.

ther approve of any measure which is good, nor oppose any that is bad, than from the slightest evidence possessed by you, of the bearing of their sentiments in this particular case.

From the personal knowledge I have of Mr. Carey, sen. who is at the head of the mission, and the opinion I have been led to entertain of him from the account of others, I feel little hesitation in saying, that he will be taught by the circumstances which have arisen, or may arise in his singular sphere of action, to appreciate the value of Christianity, as a general system of divine truth; and to lay less stress than is commonly done on those minutiæ, relating to which, its sincerest advocates have seen cause to support different conclusions. An East Indian mission, is an excellent school for teaching a wise and good man, whilst he retains his orthodoxy, to enlarge his charity,——to be chiefly concerned to promote those essential truths, which found their claim to that rank, by having been believed by all professing Christians, in all times, and in all places,—to perceive, consequently, that the differences between Calvinists and Arminians, Roman Catholics and Protestants, Trinitarians and Unitarians, are very light and insignificant, when balanced against the doting reveries and pernicious dogmas of Mahometans and Hindoos. I flatter myself, that Mr. Carey and his brethren, having had the truly Catholic spirit, from the circumstances in which they are placed, generated in themselves, will be the happy instruments of transfusing across the ocean the same spirit into the breasts of their British brethren, and that you, sir, will come in for a share of the benign afflatus.

As this is not meant to be strictly a private letter, I shall make use of it to bring forward a remark on a coadjutor of yours, par nobile fratrum, the Rev. J. P. Smith.

In his controversy with Mr. Belsham, he asserts, as you have done, that the Unitarians are deficient in missionary zeal. As a proof, he refers to the conduct of the Polish Unitarians, who, though they resided in the vicinity of the Turkish dominions, never employed any means to convert the Mahometans. If this be a fact, it is probable there were imperious circumstances, better known to themselves than to us, which would have rendered fruitless all their exertions. Nor were they at any rate more deficient in zeal as propagandists, than the Lutherans and Calvinists, who lived in the same era in Poland, whose number was larger, and their opulence and power more extensive. But the representation is far from being unlimitedly true. There is evidence in the history of the Polish Unitarians of individuals of their body labouring in Mahometan territories, for the conversion of the inhabitants.

Sandius, in his Bibliotheca Anti-Trinitariorum, mentions, in the sketches of their lives, prefixed to the lists of their works, several, who, driven by persecution into countries under the Turkish government, publicly exercised, defended and propagated His religion, for the sake of whom they had become exiles.

In order to give my individual testimony to the favourable disposition of my brethren, towards the East Indian mission, I shall with great pleasure, "cast my mite into the treasury," which I hope will annually augment, would any agent of the fund honour me with a call.

I am, Sir,
Your humble servant,
W. SEVERN.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, *Exeter, March*, 1808.

Regarding it as the primary object of the Repository, to further the cause of Christian truth and practice, I solicit your insertion of the following practical thoughts, on a subject of the first importance to the young. I solicit it, because they may thus find their way among many, who would not perhaps have an opportunity of perusing them in a different form. If they should appear to your readers calculated to produce the effects I have in view, I doubt not that the insertion of them will require no justification. I am, Sir,

Your's with respect,
L. C.

PRACTICAL REMARKS ON MATT. V. 27, 28.

In these verses our Saviour proceeds to point out another instance, in which the Scribes and Pharisees diminished the value of the Mosaic precepts, by limiting their extent, and neglecting the dispositions which lead to sin.—"Ye are informed by your teachers, that it was said to those of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery; and here they stop: they limit the law in its application; still more, they do not go to the seat of the evil, and curb those impure desires from which actual crime proceeds. But such is not the morality I enjoin; I say unto you, that *he who indulgeth impure desire, hath stained himself with the guilt of actual crime.*"—'Tis a rigid but benevolent morality. It checks the evil, where it is easiest, where almost alone possible, effectually to check it; it checks the formation of criminal desire. He who indulges impure desire, either only waits for opportunity, or is acting the part of a madman, rashly trifling with what will be his ruin.

Consider the view which our Lord gives us, of the criminality of fostering those desires which lead to sin, simply as necessary to preserve from sinful acts, it is wisely benevolent: for what is the too generally observed course? criminal desire indulged; heightened beyond what at first would

have excited the most awful alarm; still indulged but now without alarm; excited by temptation, but perchance for a time checked by the fear of God; more strongly and unexpectedly excited by some more powerful temptation; —all is now to be feared that duty shudders to contemplate; criminal gratification increasing criminal desire, till the restraints of religion are thrown off, and the mind submits to the yoke of vice. It fancies itself free, and, in the moment of gaiety and dissipated thought, laughs at its former scruples;—but truth would show that tribulation and anguish must follow close upon the steps of vicious pleasure, that under the garb of liberty are concealed the fetters of the most enslaving and destructive tyrant.

But leave out of consideration the general tendency of indulging desires, to lead to the gratification of them,—observe the effects of indulging criminal desires when they do not proceed to overt acts. The soul may be polluted, debased by sensuality, without any generally perceptible effects on the conduct. This will necessarily result from giving the rein to improper trains of thought, from cherishing improper feelings. When this is the case, thoughts and feelings which rank among the most worthy, are alloyed; their value is diminished; their efficacy upon the conduct impeded.

Could the young but fully discern, or could they be brought fully to believe, the general, the almost necessary effects of cherishing impure thoughts and feelings, one would hope that many a thoughtless wretch would be saved the pangs of remorse,—many a life be prolonged for usefulness,—many a soul be preserved from perdition. But they hear of the power of habit, and the connexion between desire and action, and the enslaving nature of vicious feelings;—and they speak of these things, and perhaps reason about them; but they feel not their full force: they cannot conceive, from their versatile thoughts and feelings, how any can gain such an ascendancy as to lead imperiously to destruction; and, though they may yield a speculative assent to the representations of those who have their own sad experience to guide them, or speak from the sad experience of others, yet a full practical belief is wanting, and they go on with thoughtless security, even when walking among the thickest snares of the enemy.

In a thousand, in ten thousand instances, *the first step to ruin has been the indulging in impure conversation.* "What harm can it do so long as we do not act wrong," has been the reply to the suggestions of the religious friend, or to the suggestions of conscience. What harm!—why the worst, that of strengthening propensities which wisdom loudly commands to curb.—Words, with an unperceived, sometimes scarcely perceptible, connexion, introduce and invigorate trains of thought and affection; they call up their corresponding imagery, or bring into play their corresponding feelings. The more these are recalled to the mind, the more they become connected with other trains of ideas, and with accidental circumstances of time and place. Thus they are intro-

duced where otherwise no connexion would have existed; and being thus indulged and strengthened, the imagination becomes disordered and debased, and what to the pure mind would be pure, then furnishes food for unhallowed thoughts, cherishes unhallowed desires, and often strongly excites to licentious actions.—Can it then be asked, "where is the harm?" In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, this will be the result in some shape or other:—but take the hundredth; surely it must be admitted that holiness cannot reside in so impure a habitation. Gusts there may be of devotional feeling; but settled habitual piety cannot exist in a heart so debased. Every holy feeling must be checked, almost annihilated, by those opposing desires. Both classes cannot rule; and those which submit, will soon cease to be the regulating motives of the conduct, will soon lose their vividness and their vigour.

I am confident I do not overcharge the picture. There is no call for exaggeration: the consequences are so obvious, that those who are alive to duty's call, who listen to the still small voice which speaks within them, will obey their warning and shun the first lure of vice however harmless its appearance. I shall be grateful if what I say should reach the heart of one young person who has not yet seriously thought of the necessity of keeping the heart with all diligence, should preserve one from listening to or sharing in licentious conversation, from reading licentious books, or those which have the felt effect of exciting irregular thoughts and desires, from indulging, where they have been accidentally called into the mind, ideas and feelings which could not be shamelessly owned to a revered friend;—or if it should lead any to impose a restraint upon themselves, which before they had not thought necessary, and thus preserve from farther wanderings. But the effort will not have been lost, if it should merely rouse the sleeping conscience; it may diminish the evil, if it do not eradicate it:—that torpor of the conscience is the death of all the highest principles of religious worth.

Give up any thing,—yes, every thing, rather than depart from duty: 'tis the command of Jesus, and wisdom directs to obey. Cultivate the love of duty, the desire of following its dictates to the utmost. Whatever leads you towards the paths of sin, let it be sacrificed however dear or valuable. Hold yourselves ready to obey the first promptings of conscience; and let no present good, no present evil, have sufficient power over you to lead you to forfeit your hopes of heaven. It is better to lose all here, than subject yourselves to misery hereafter: better to sacrifice every hope of happiness here, than lose the happiness of eternity.

Would that my young readers might be led to serious thought by these reflections, that they would make them the foundation of their principles of conduct. They are prompted by the earnest wish to save them from knowing, by experience, the dreadful consequences of indulging irregular desires, of fostering them by reading or by conversation;—by the earnest wish to make those feel who have already erred in this

respect, that though they perhaps have not yet thought so, they have in reality entered into the paths of sin,—that they share in the criminality of licentiousness,—in order that before they have run those lengths which there is reason to apprehend, before they have given full scope to enslaving passions, they may be induced to stop, and to reflect, and to impose a check upon unholy feelings, and, perhaps, by the blessing of God upon their exertions, enabled to change altogether the current of imagination and desire, and to yield their hearts to the constant influence of pure and worthy affections.

I know I do not urge the young to a generally easy task, when I urge them to watch over and regulate their thoughts and feelings. Those who have enjoyed the inestimable advantage of parents more attentive to the future welfare of their offspring than to their present gratification and their own present enjoyment, and who by the wise direction of parental care have been early taught the habit of self-restraint,—who in small things have learnt to subdue their inclinations,—who can cheerfully give up an immediate pleasure in obedience to the directions of the beloved guardians of their early years,—they have the rudiments prepared for that control over their passions which will make their voice, if not unheard, at least not obeyed,—for that noble, dignified self-command which will make the sacrifice of inclination comparatively easy and certain, whenever duty demands the sacrifice.—If this prudent self-control (which one who was dreadfully deficient in it pronounced to be wisdom's root,) have not been cultivated, the difficulty will be much greater; but a strong sense of duty will sometimes well supply the deficiency. At any rate the work must be attempted, for the happiness of life, the happiness of eternity, in a great measure depends upon it.

To those who happily have not yet felt the power of licentious inclinations, as well as to those who perceive wrong tendencies in their minds and are desirous of correcting and restraining them, it may not be useless to suggest some obvious directions, which will assist them to submit their hearts to that regulation whose end is peace and everlasting happiness.

1. Shun, as much as practicable, the company of those whose words or actions are inconsistent with that purity of mind which the gospel inculcates, and which it is your highest wisdom to cultivate. In choosing your situations for life, let it be your object to keep clear of those which will inevitably lead you into temptation. If with all your care and caution, you are exposed to the influence of evil example, if you are obliged sometimes to hear or see what has a tendency to call up wrong feelings in the mind, earnestly endeavour to connect with it feelings of disapprobation,—never suffer yourselves to approve what you know that God forbids,—and strive to divert the current of thought and feeling from that channel into which they have unintentionally been led. For this purpose then

2. Endeavour to find full and useful or at least innocent employment for your time and thoughts.

Think nothing innocent which diminishes your power over your own minds, which leads you to seek for gratification rather than improvement. Devote yourselves to the full discharge of the duties of your station: let your amusements be active and cheerful, but innocent: and let your leisure time be, as much as practicable, employed in cultivating those branches of knowledge which will furnish a useful occupation for your thoughts and at the same time expand the powers of your minds. Every hour spent in such pursuits (where higher duties do not demand it,) is an hour well spent; not only as they cultivate and improve the mind, but as they prevent, for the time, the introduction of wrong thoughts and feelings, and give the mind an habitual bent to those which refine it, and which while they oppose and check impure desires and affections, claim an alliance with and cherish those which will accompany to heaven.

3. Cultivate a high sense of your duties to others. Remember that you are placed here not for your own welfare merely, but to contribute all you can to the welfare of others. With this view let every feeling be checked that prompts to conduct which will narrow, perhaps altogether destroy your powers of usefulness, which will necessarily prevent the due fulfilment of social duty, and perhaps lead others to depart, even more widely than yourselves, from the course which prudence and benevolence and piety all point to as necessary for your well being.—Think too what you owe to those who for a long succession of years have been your guardians, who have cared for you when you could not care for yourselves, who, to fulfil their duties to you, have gone through numberless anxieties and privations, and experienced many painful days and sleepless nights, and who have laboured to instil those principles and to give that regulation which direct the heart to God and duty, and which carefully cultivated by yourselves will make you useful, respectable, and happy. Let it be your earnest determination, that your conduct shall not wound those to whom under Providence you owe every thing.

4. Cultivate by all the means in your power, and particularly by sincere obedience, the feelings of conscience and habitual submission to its dictates. Judge of their correctness by a diligent attention to the precepts of the gospel, and by the holy example of Jesus. Think how he would have acted in your situation, and aim to imbibe some portion of his heavenly spirit. Arm your internal monitor with the sanctions which Jesus revealed; and let the hopes and fears of eternity be called in to support its authority.—Never tamper with your conscience yourselves, nor listen to those who would, by making you view with less disapprobation what you know to be wrong, and diminishing your ready and lively approbation of what you know to be right. Bear in mind that you may tamper with your conscience till you make it speak what language you please, for a time at least. Habitually obey its warning voice, and it will preserve you amidst the discordant emotions which would

endanger your spirital well-being, and will safely guide you through the intricacies of life in the paths of holiness. Above all,

5. Cultivate by habitual exercise those devout affections, which will bring the thoughts of God to regulate your hearts and lives.—Whether the idea occur or not to your minds, it is indisputably true, that you are always, and in all situations under the inspection of that great Being who searcheth the heart. Let this thought be blended as much as possible with all your motives: often make a direct reference of them to him. Frequently put to yourselves the question, are they such as He approves? am I indulging trains of thought and feeling which check such as the thoughts of God inspire? or can I consistently unite with them those thoughts, and cheerfully think of His constant presence?—"Harbour not a thought or a feeling, indulge not a desire, which you would be ashamed to own to a respected friend," has often been the advice of virtuous prudence. Religion extends the admonition, and tells you, that there is an eye which seeth when no human eye seeth, which discerneth the recesses of the heart. In His presence we live: it is His approbation which must make us happy. Let His will then be our guide, and in all things let us follow whithersoever it leadeth here, for it will finally lead us to heaven.

REVIEW.

"STILL PLEAS'D TO PRAISE, YET NOT AFRAID TO BLAME."

POPE.

ART. I. *Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Priestley*, &c. &c. vol. ii. 8vo, 10s. 6d. Johnson, London.

In our review of the former part of this work, (M. Repos. vol. i. p. 429 and 481,) we promised a speedy notice of the present volume, which however, from causes not interesting to the reader, has but lately fallen into our hands. We say *volume* in conformity to the title page, but in reality the book before us is a continuation of the former volume, the pages running on from that to this. Both parts might have been conveniently included in the same volume, and the greater part of the buyers of the work, will, we should imagine, bind them up together. They are not we hope, divided by the bookseller for the sake of the price, which we cannot but consider as much too high.

The life of Dr. Priestley was important and eventful. A better subject for biography can scarcely be imagined. Whether these *Memoirs* will answer the expectations of the public, may be fairly questioned. We sincerely wish the Doctor's life had been

written in England, rather than in America. There is one gentleman, well known to our readers, who is peculiarly fitted to be the biographer of his friend Dr. Priestley, and whose masterly and discriminating pen, may yet, we flatter ourselves, be employed on this interesting subject. With the exception of the Doctor's own narrative, there is nothing in the present work, that is likely to be reprinted.

Vol II. Consists of "A Review of Dr. Priestley's Theological works," styled "Appendix, No. 6," and of "Four Posthumous Discou[illegible]s."

The *Review*, which is of considerable length, is fairly drawn up, and if it displays no depth of erudition or strength of argument, abundantly evinces the writer's diligence, and his acquaintance with the theological pursuits which he traces. The occasion and design of Dr. Priestley's numerous publications on religion are perspicuously stated. To such as do not possess his multifarious works, the Review will present an interesting and instructive view of his labours.

The *Discourses*, compared with those published by the author when living, will appear, we apprehend, to have been written in the decline of life. They are good, but most of Dr. Priestley's former discourses are better.

At the end of the volume is given a complete catalogue of Dr. Priestley's works, which form of themselves no inconsiderable library, and which contain instruction on almost every subject that it behoves man to study as a rational and moral being. It is an honour to our country to have given birth to such a writer,—— his treatment by his countrymen, will be matter of wonder to posterity. But he has his reward, ——the growing veneration of the Christian world: and he will be fully rewarded in that day when bigotry and persecution shall be driven into darkness, loaded with shame and contempt.

ART. II. *Posthumous Essays, by Mr. Abraham Booth. To which is annexed his Confession of Faith, delivered at the Ordination, in Goodman's Fields, Feb.* 16, 1769. 12mo. pp. 105, Button, London. 1808.

ABRAHAM BOOTH was a pillar of the orthodox church. The strictness of his opinions, more than his talents, which though respectable, were by no means great, caused him to be looked up to with respect. He approached in sentiment and character near to the Puritans, and would not have disgraced the age of his favourite Owen.

These Posthumous Essays, however acceptable to the author's friends, the rigid Calvinists, will not add to his reputation. They are sufficiently tinctured with party phraseology; but, taking off this imposing covering, are superficial and meagre. They contain little of argument, and the tinsel epithets which bedeck the style, are scarcely suitable to the author's well known gravity.

One of the Essays treats of the doctrine of a sinner's reconciliation to God,——a doctrine

of which Calvinists are perpetually speaking and writing, but of which they are in general lamentably ignorant. On this subject Mr. B. with ludicrous positivity, first contradicts the scriptures, and then contradicts himself. Let the reader compare the two following passages.

"The blessing of reconciliation is presented to view, in the tidings of heavenly mercy, under a two-fold consideration: that is *of God being reconciled to man*, and of man being reconciled to God; both of which are essential to human happiness. *It is of the former, however, that the inspired writers most frequently speak*; and in the displaying of which evangelical truth is principally concerned." Pp. 35, 36.

"*It is not, indeed, in the sacred volume, any where expressly said, that God is reconciled to us by the death of Christ; but that we are by his death, reconciled to God*: and this the Socinians plead, when opposing the doctrine of atonement by our Lord. To which we may reply; *the reason probably is*, because God is the party offended." P. 37.

The Socinians, it seems, (of whom Mr. Booth elsewhere says, never having probably, like most of his brethren, read a single Socinian treatise, that they deny most of the capital points of the gospel,) have the positive language of scripture on their side, and the Calvinists are driven to the hard expedient of discovering a *probable reason*, why the sacred writers said one thing, and meant another.

It is but justice to Mr. Booth to admit that some of his practical observations are very judicious, and that they bear very hard upon some of the language and practices of *Evangelical Professors*.

In a note, p. 97, the Editor of the Essays complains of the *disingenuity* of Mr. Andrew Fuller, who in his Dialogues, published after Mr. Booth's death, introduces the deceased under a feigned name, with a view to refute his notion of *the imputation of sin to Christ*. Mr. Fuller must answer this charge for himself: we have only to wish that these disputes between the pretenders to divine illumination, concerning orthodoxy, may teach them a lesson of modesty and charity.

ART. III. *The Right and Duty of a Faithful and Fearless Examination of the Scirptures: asserted in a Sermon, preached at the Calvinist Baptist Chapel, Hull; on the Resignation of the Pastoral Office in that place, occasioned by the Author's embracing the Unitarian Doctrine.* By James Lyons. 8vo. 1s. 6d. Eaton, London. 1808.

Seldom have we perused so interesting a sermon as this by Mr. Lyons. It is equally distinguished by manliness, simplicity, modesty and piety. It first establishes the great PROTESTANT principle of the right of private Judgment, and then grafts upon this principle the UNITARIAN doctrine. This is the just order of things; let men inquire, wherever inquiry may end; let them prove all things, and the chance is that they will hold fast that which is good.

Mr. Lyons is himself an example of the character which he describes. He has nobly dared to think for himself in matters of religion:—nay more, he has had

the courage to tell the people whom he has instructed for years, "I have taught you errors." It would have been to the honour of that people if they had resolved, like the Bereans, to examine the scriptures, to see "if these things were so." However, their late pastor's conduct will no doubt leave a useful impression upon some of their minds, and cause them to commence a course of inquiry which will terminate in the perception of "the truth, as it is in Jesus"

An account of Mr. Lyons's "declaration of Unitarianism" was given in a former number*. We are happy that having been first a *confessor*, he has since become a *missionary;* and that he is, within a few days, to preach in this metropolis, the annual sermon in behalf of the *Unitarian Fund*.

Unitarianism, which for a long time seemed to languish, is now quick and stirring. It works in the church and among dissenters, and the result will, we are assured, be the calling forth of a new race of Christians, who shall be at once inquiring and pious, rational and zealous.

* P. 166.

MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS;

OR,

The Christian's Survey of the Political World.

"THERE are many prophecies, which declare the fall of the ecclesiastical powers of the Christian world: and though each church seems to flatter itself with the hopes of being exempted; yet it is very plain, that the prophetical characters belong to all. They have all left the true, pure, simple religion, and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. They are all merchants of the earth, and have set up a kingdom of this world, abounding in riches, temporal power, and external pomp. They have all a dogmatising spirit, and persecute such, as do not receive their own mark, and worship the image which they have set up. They all neglect Christ's command of preaching the gospel to all nations, and even that of going to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; there being innumerable multitudes in all Christian countries, who have never been taught to read, and who are in other respects also destitute of the means of saving knowledge. It is very true, that the church of Rome is Babylon the great, and the mother of harlots, and of the abominations of the earth. But all the rest have copied her example more or less. They have all received money like Gehazi, and therefore the leprosy of Naaman will cleave to them and their seed for ever. And this impurity may be considered not only, as justifying the application of the prophecies to all the Christian churches, but as a natural cause for their downfal. The corrupt governors of the several churches will ever oppose the true gospel, and in so doing will bring ruin upon themselves."

The above was written and published nearly sixty years ago, by the very eminent and learned Dr. Hartley, a physician educated at Jesus College in the University of Cambridge, and whose remarks on the truth of Christianity are, with all his observations on the moral and religious actions of man, deserving of attention from the serious Christian. Every thing announces, that his prediction is very near its accomplishment. The revolution of a state may engage the politician, but the downfal of su-

perstition and religious tyranny, is of more importance to the true Christian. Yet the church of Spain has not, as we yet know, received a shock from the late political events in that country, and seldom has so extraordinary an appearance been presented to the world, as that which has taken place on the frontiers of France and Spain. The emperor of France, he, who was lately a mere son of man, an object of contempt or scorn to the great ones of the earth, is now sitting, as it were, in judgment on the actions of the Spanish cabinet, and deciding on the merits of two competitors for the crown. The old king and his son, with the discarded minister, the Prince of the Peace, are all at the court of Buonaparte. He will determine, who shall nominally be the sovereign; whilst he himself is really the governor.

His troops have complete possession of the country; and the natives divided between the old and the young king, are too much broken to make any effectual resistance. The interference of the emperor must be paid for, and the easiest sacrifice will be the revenues of the church. Buonaparte's known disposition for religious toleration does not accord with the continuance of the Inquisition. Hence, whatever may be the fate of the contending kings, or the fallen minister, we look forward to objects of much greater importance, the restoration of religious liberty to the Spaniards; the downfal of the Inquisition; the abolition of monastic vows, and the weakening of the Spanish church to such a degree, that Rome shall feel the shock to its very foundation. What farther acts Buonaparte may have in view, time will show; but our next may probably announce the laws he issues at Madrid.

Another great event is said to have taken place, a rupture between France and the Porte. The crescent of Mahomet has been diminishing for some time, and its abominations will be purged away. That apostate church cannot be permitted to continue its sway: and, if the Porte should have given the opportunity, this may be the time for the three powers of France, Austria, and Russia, dividing among themselves its European dominions. In Transylvania and Wallachia are many worshipers of the God of Jesus Christ; and, when religious liberty is established in Greece, and along the southern borders of the Danube, the deluded Mahometan may see through his errors, and cast off the conceits of the false prophet.

In the north of Europe war continues. It is merely a political struggle; and the Russian troops have obtained signal advantages over the Swedes. They have taken the fortress of Sweaburg, the Gibraltar of Finland, and the Swedish flotilla. In fact they are probably by this time complete masters of Finland; and, as the sea is now open, will, before our fleet can enter the Gulf of Bothnia, have conveyed an army into Sweden. A singular part of the agreement, made at Sweaburg, is that at the conclusion of peace, the flotilla shall be restored to Sweden, in case the English restore to Denmark the fleet taken last year.

News has arrived, that the Prince Regent of Portugal has reached the Brasils, has been received with joy, and every prospect is held out of his forming there, with proper exertions and judgment, a grand empire. England is to be the favoured country, and thus an opening is made for our commerce, which will be extremely beneficial. If a few colonies of English were transplanted to that country, the Prince would find his account in it: and it is to be hoped, that the experience of the past will have cured the religious prejudices of the Portuguese cabinet, and opened their minds to liberty of conscience, and the knowledge of gospel truths. One thing in favour of the Brasilians is, that the Pope's nuncio has been driven by stress of weather into England; and, before his arrival at the Brasils, measures may have been taken by that country to emancipate itself from the Popish yoke. The prospects opening upon the mind in the new world, may compensate for the horrid scenes, which of late years Europe has presented to us: but we must wait patiently for the appointed times of Providence.

The first act of the drama, with respect to Mr. Stone's long agitated cause, is finished: and a very important scene it opens to the members of the church of England, and much occasion for reflection to the true Christian. It will be recollected, that the origin of this cause is a sermon, preached before an archdeacon and his clergy, by Mr. Stone, in which he denies, that Jesus Christ is

the supreme God, and affirms, that Jesus Christ was the son of Joseph and Mary, born in holy wedlock like any other man. For this doctrine he was cited to appear in an ecclesiastical court by the King's procurator-general, and till lately at the instigation, it was supposed, of some private persons. After the usual delays of these courts, the cause came to the point, when Mr. Stone was either by himself or council to speak in his own defence. He chose the former, and in a speech of two hours defended himself, considering his advanced age, being upwards of seventy years old, in a firm, noble and dignified manner. The whole of his defence rested upon these two points; first, that he preached the truth as it is in scripture: secondly, that he preached agreeably to the solemn vow, made in the sight of God, the bishop, clergy, and laity at his ordination.

That he preached the truth agreeably to scripture, he gave sufficient proof by a variety of passages, taken from the old and new testaments; and there cannot be a doubt, that he preached agreeably to his ordination vow, since that vow pressed on him the obligation to preach in sincerity, whatever appeared to him to be the truth in God's word. He drew, what appeared to him, a just distinction between the churches of England and Rome; namely, that while the latter claims infallibility, the former acknowledges the fallibity of councils and churches, and could therefore not mean to assert infallibility to her articles. He was open to conviction; and, if any thing he had uttered, was contrary to God's word, he begged to have such error pointed out to him, and he was ready to revoke it: but to say that he was wrong, merely because he denied a doctrine, as explained in the articles, was claiming for those articles an authority, which was derogatory to the words and command of our master Jesus Christ. His appeal to the situation of his bishop, with one foot in the grave like himself, and who must shortly appear at the great tribunal of the great bishop of the flock, affected the whole audience: and he concluded his oration with a well turned compliment to his judge, his junior at the same college, for his conduct in civil matters, though he disclaimed the propriety of his interference in questions, which required the learning and judgment of grave divines, and serious Christians.

It was indeed a very affecting scene. A clergyman, upwards of seventy years of age, addressing a court, of which the greater part of the members were very much his juniors, and had been educated in the same university, namely Oxford. After the defence, we were naturally curious to hear the reply of the council against him: when three doctors attacked it, one with a degree of virulence and acrimony, which the occasion by no means required, and which the sight of an aged clergyman, so much his superior in learning and years, might have repressed. But these doctors blinked the sacred part of the question completely. Every word they uttered, would have suited a heathen temple, and a Roman proconsul, sitting in judgment upon a Christian martyr, or a supposed heretic, standing before the Inquisition. They did not trouble themselves with the question, whether Mr. Stone had acted, as a true minister of Christ ought to do; but, whether he had maintained any opinion contrary to the thirty-nine articles. In this they seemed to have acted wisely: but they brought forward one point, which we were not so well prepared to hear. This was, that the prosecution was not instituted by the bishop, nor by any private man or set of men, whose organ the prosecutor was; but the prosecution was set on foot, and carried on by the State, and the proctor acted for the State, in the same manner as the attorney-general prosecuted in cases of high treason. The prosecution thus, wears a very different aspect, and may be considered, as a test of the opinion maintained on sacred subjects by the higher powers, or of a new era in the history of the church of England, which has hitherto, or at least for upwards of a hundred years, allowed a very great latitude to its ministers. As a proof of this we need only refer to the writings of Hoadly, Clarke, bishop Law, the present bishops Watson and Prettyman, and many others.

After the three council had finished their harangues, the judge summed up very concisely the whole of the process, declaring, that the facts were clearly proved, and that nothing remained for him to do, but to proclaim the sentence of the court, unless the defendant revoked his errors; and he gave him to that day week for the purpose, charging him to appear on that day, and assuring him, that unless he appeared, and re-

voked his errors, he should be deprived of his living. The court was remarkably crowded, during the whole of this extraordinary scene, which will make a deep impression on many of the spectators, and may perhaps lead not a few to inquire, on what grounds they maintain many vulgar opinions; and thence lead them to the only source of truth, the holy scriptures,——scriptures, so completely contaminated by the traditions of men, that one is at a loss to say, which has done the most injury to divine truth, the Pharisees by their traditions on the old testament, or the Christians by their authoritative and equally licentious traditions on the new testament.

On the following Friday, Mr. Stone appeared again in court, which was crowded more than before, and he delivered in a writing, the purport of which was, that he was not aware of the antiquated act of Queen Elizabeth, and that he thought himself perfectly justified by his ordination vow, in preaching as he had done; but he was willing to say, that he would not offend in like manner against the act of parliament. This did not satisfy the court, which insisted upon the venerable preacher's denying his doctrine of one God in one person, and acknowledging one god in three persons, and that Jesus was one of the persons forming the trinity, which is by the churches of England and Rome called God, and declaring that Jesus was the son of Mary, without the aid of man. This Mr. Stone strenuously refused to do; but he begged leave not to be misrepresented by this denial, as holding a doctrine, which had been wrongly imputed to him; for he believed, and did glory in believing, that salvation came through Jesus alone, by whose obedience we were saved; and that eternal life is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our lord. Sir W. Scott said, that he had nothing farther to do, and that the Bishop of London would take his seat, and deprive the defendant of his living.

The words were scarcely out of his mouth, when a cry of, "Clear the way for his lordship" was heard, and in entered the Lord Bishop of London, accompanied by the Lord Bishop of Lincoln, and some other divines in their full dresses and wigs. The Lord Bishop of London took the seat of the judge, who placed himself at the right hand of the chair, and told his lordship all that had passed. Upon which, his lordship, without any comment or address to his aged brother, began to read a very long writing, which ended with declaring the old man to be deprived of his living; Mr. Stone received the sentence with firmness and with a loud ejaculation, The Lord's will be done! The bishops retired, and soon after Mr. Stone's proctor appealed from the decision of the bishop to a higher court. What matter of reflection does not the whole of this process afford to a serious mind! The question between the bishop and Mr. Stone will be tried one day at a more awful tribunal, when the son of God himself will be known in his character of judge! Of the two opinions, that of the Trinity, and that of one only God, the God of Jesus Christ, one only can be right; and whatever may be the opinion of a court of frail mortals upon this subject, it becomes every true Christian to be fully persuaded in his own mind; and, without any regard to human authority or human opinions, to worship that God only, whom Jesus Christ worshipped, and to whom he commanded us to address our prayers.

The appearance of the bishop of Lincoln at this ceremony excited some surprise: but it is to be recollected, that he acted in the capacity of Dean of St. Paul's. The language of this Bishop is as decisively against the articles, as is Mr. Stone's though the subjects are different. The articles say, that the Athanasian creed ought to be received and believed: and this creed says, that whoever does not believe it shall perish everlastingly. The bishop of Lincoln asserts the contrary in his Elements of Theology, saying, in the second volume, page 228, "it is utterly repugnant to the attributes of God, and it cannot be reconciled to our ideas of common justice, that a person should be consigned to eternal punishment, because he did not believe certain articles of faith, which were never proposed to him, or of the truth of which he was not qualified to judge." And in another place, page 222, his lordship says, "I cannot but conceive it to be both unnecessary and presumptuous to say, that, except every one do keep them whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly."

On the day that Mr. Stone was making his defence, a very great assembly was collected at St. Bride's church, of ministers of the church of England and dissenting ministers, chiefly of the methodist persuasion, the majority being dissenters. The occasion of the meeting was to hear a sermon on the subject of sending missionaries to the heathen countries, for which purpose a society has been formed, and a very great subscription raised. The design is doubtless laudable, provided the missionaries carry with them the pure spirit and truth of the gospel: but it becomes them, and the society also to consider, whether they are carrying into heathen countries, the word of God, or the traditions of man. One way to secure them from the errors, into which European Christians have fallen, is not to admit a single word in their preaching or teaching, which is not in the scriptures. If they carry the scriptures only without any explanation, they are doing service. The union of dissenters with churchmen proves, that the disputes about discipline, which so much agitated former times, have in a great degree subsided, and every true Christian must rejoice in every prospect of peace and union in any one respect, taking place of that discord and animosity against each other, which has been so peculiar a mark of Christian sects.

But this age is far from being the enlightened age, which flattery so often paints in glittering colours; and the Christians of all sects have enough to do, before they can prove themselves worthy of the holy name, by which they are called. One could hardly imagine, that within sixty miles of London, the belief of witchcraft should produce any serious consequences: yet so it is, and the missionary society, instead of wasting its strength in foreign nations, will find sufficient employment at home, in rooting out prejudice, and bringing men to the pure knowledge of Christ. Not long ago, two young women of a village in Huntingdonshire, thought themselves to be bewitched by a poor old woman, living near them, and to her they ascribed the convulsion fits, which frequently seized them. Under this persuasion they got three young men to break open the door of the poor woman's cottage, about ten o'clock at night, when she was in bed with her husband, and to force her out of bed into the yard, where the young women with pins and their nails drew blood from her, and, as they said, recovered immediately. The notion of the effect of witches' blood is prevalent among the lower classes in that district, who are still so merged in ignorance, as to believe in witchcraft. However, some are exempt from this horrid folly and superstition; and in consequence the three young men were apprehended, and carried before the bench of justices, sitting at Huntingdon, on the 14th of May, and by them are bound over to take their trial at the next assizes.

How prone is the mind of man to folly, when not enlightened by the pure principles of the gospel! and how thankful ought the true Christian to be, that he is under the gentle yoke of Christ, by which he is made superior to all such idle notions, as occupy the mind with vain terrors, and bring it into subjection to the strangest conceits—conceits creating various objects of religious adoration or superstitious dread. From all these the mind is free, which believes, that there is one only God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: who does not permit the disciples of Christ to be duped by those fables, which were current in the heathen world, and kept up by the delusions of heathen priests. We must pity the unfortunate women, who are enslaved under such horrible bondage; as we must all those in still higher ranks, who pay adoration to any person or being except Him, to whom we are ordered by our Saviour to offer up our prayers, and to address under the title of his Father and our Father, his God and our God.

OBITUARY.

Mr. Benjamin Goldsmid.

This melancholy part of our monthly labours is rendered more melancholy this month by our having to record two affecting instances of SUICIDE—the crime and reproach of our country. More instances might be brought forward, but we wish not to drag into notice, unnecessarily, the unhappy persons who with such infatuation rush into oblivion; and these cases will suffice to record the mania of the times, and to excite the reader's pity towards the subjects of this species of desperation, and his prayer to the Almighty Preserver of men, that he may be kept from the "presumptuous sin," the national, the "great transgression."

At his seat in Roehampton, Mr. BENJAMIN GOLDSMID, one of the Jewish nation, equally distinguished for his opulence and charities.

The Goldsmids, of whom the late Benjamin and Abraham, who survives him, are best known to the commercial world, are the sons of a respectable Dutch merchant, who brought them into England, when very young. At the usual age, they embarked in business, and by industry, ability, and probity, soon acquired great credit. Their commercial transactions became extraordinarily great and extensive; they were the chief money-factors for the Government; and their wealth was reputed to be prodigious.

Mr. B. Goldsmid, with his brothers, adhered to the religion of his fathers, though without bigotry. He was the friend of his own people, and the patron of literature among them. In one instance, he is said to have given scandal to the rigid Jews, by receiving the Prince of Wales, in a splendid manner, at Roehampton, during the time of the Jewish sabbath. His complaisance to the prince, who is reported to have chosen the day of his visit, with an inconsideration which, in any but a prince, would have been culpable, was thought to be at the expense of his religion.

The benefactions of Mr. Goldsmid were by no means confined to the Jews. The Marine Society, the Royal Humane Society, the hospitals, and other charitable institutions, partook largely of his bounty. He thus broke through a stubborn religious prejudice; and some opulent Christians have followed his liberal example, by subscribing to the Jewish school. His charities were not suspicious, for the Jews are not desirous of converts: unlike those of the Methodists to the Jews, which are done with a view to proselytism. The good Samaritan was not a zealot.

Mr. Goldsmid's establishment at Roehampton was princely. Many of the nobility were unable to vie with him in expense. He gave dinners to cabinet ministers. The Prince of Wales, as before observed, was his visitor. And he was once honoured with the company of the Royal Family at his villa, when the King introduced the brothers to the Queen as his *friends*.

What a sad end to such a course of prosperity! A rope! and a coroner's inquest!

Owing to some cause which we pretend not to state, Mr. G. seems to have sunk for some time into a state of melancholy. In the beginning of last month, he executed, in the momentary absence of the servant that constantly attended him, the fatal purpose that he appears to have long meditated. He was found suspended in his bed by a silken cord, and dead beyond recovery.

By management, the cause and manner of his death were for some time stifled in the public prints, and the coroner's inquest was unusually delayed. The influence by which this was effected is thought to have saved the life of more than one condemned criminal in the desperate case of forgery.

The funeral scene of this companion of princes, and envy of nobles, was most humiliating. Such are the reverses of human affairs—such the instability of that respect which is built chiefly on riches! A hearse conveyed his body before day-light to the Jews' burying-ground, in Mile-End, attended by a single mourning-coach and two or three servants. The Chief Rabbi refused him funeral rites—and his ashes, as if unworthy to repose with those of his brethren, were thrust into a grave out of

James Paull, Esq.

the pale of consecrated ground—the resting-place of malefactors!

By a verdict of *lunacy*, on the part of the coroner's inquest, the property of the unhappy man is saved to his family, who are not, we believe, left in such affluent circumstances as they had reason to expect. He was about 55 years of age, and has left a widow and seven children. The eldest son, a young man of 19, lately forsook the Jewish faith, and was naturalized, and is now an officer in the Putney corps of volunteers. In relation to this circumstance, probably, the deceased father once said, if common rumour be not fallacious, that he should be the last Jew of his family.

On Friday, April 15, at his house, in Charles-street, St. James's square, JAMES PAULL, Esq. lately well known in the political world. He was the son of a tradesman at Perth, in Scotland, who procured him early in life (after the Scotch manner) an appointment in India, that mine of wealth, in which every adventurer expects to load himself with riches. Here Mr. Paull acquired, as he expected, a large fortune. He returned home to enjoy it; but being introduced to high company, and that, amongst others, of the Prince of Wales, he soon found his resources diminished. A second time, therefore, he went to India, to recruit his finances; and by the countenance, as has been said, of the Marquis of Wellesley, again succeeded in accumulating great riches. On coming home he obtained a seat in Parliament, and then, from what cause is scarcely known, for the world does not give him credit for patriotism, preferred charges of mismanagement, in the House, against the Marquis, his reputed benefactor. Indian delinquency is secure of impunity. Mr. Paull was heard at first with surprise and indifference. He persevered. His very perseverance and urgency made him attended to, and then feared. The ministers of the day, the relics of the Pitt party, thwarted and endeavoured to perplex him. Public attention was awakened, and it began to be thought that there was some ground for his accusation, whatever might be the motive of it. At this time, Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville united, and came into power; and the world was soon surprised in witnessing the ascendancy of the Grenville party, which was shewn in nothing more than in protecting the Marquis, a relation and former associate. Mr. Fox acted, indeed, with his usual manliness, but it was clear that the ministry in general were over-ruled in their votes. On the dissolution of the Pitt parliament Mr. Paull lost his seat, and, with it, the likelihood of procuring another; for the Prince of Wales, who had promised to stand by him, deserted him, and the ministry opposed him. In the new election, Mr. Fox dying about the time, Mr. Paull put up for Westminster against Mr. Sheridan, and met with wonderful support. He was not, however, returned; and though he petitioned the House he gained nothing; for a new election took place under a new ministry, before his petition was tried. It was Mr. Paull's ambition to gain a seat for Westminster, to accomplish which, he left no means untried, fair or unfair. By making use, improperly, in an advertisement in the public papers, of the name of Sir Francis Burdett, his former friend and patron, a dispute arose between him and that gentleman, which led to a duel, in which both were severely wounded. In this affair, Mr. Paull discovered a malignity, and even a thirst of blood, that raised the public indignation. Mr. Horne Tooke wrote a narrative of the affair, charging home upon Mr. Paull improper practices, and an unmanly spirit; but this pamphlet was tinctured with malevolence, and did the author as much disservice in the general opinion as Mr. Paull. While the wounded duellists were confined to their beds, the Westminster election took a strange turn, Mr Paull was forgotten; and Sir Francis Burdett was returned in a triumphant manner, and, according to the old independent usage, at the sole expense of the electors. To the pains of Mr. Paull's wound, were now added inconceivable agonies of mind. The other day, the idol of the populace, he was now their scorn. He had alienated his respectable friends. And besides this he was encumbered with a weight of debt. As soon as he could use a pen, he wrote a reply to Horne Tooke's pamphlet; but the time was gone by; and he found the public indifferent to him and his complaints. Even his fast friend, Mr. Cobbett, (the political journalist,) let him go when he found the people felt no interest in him. From this time, it is said, he took to

play. He wrote, not long before his death, a letter to Mr. Whitbread, on the pensions voted by Parliament to Lord Lake's family. But his mind was evidently broken up. He was capricious and irascible. He at length ended his life, and his remorse and vexation together, by opening veins in his arms and cutting his throat.

It is not certainly known, that he died in poverty. It is even asserted that he was still wealthy. The newspapers, which delight in a wonder, state, that the day after his death a packet arrived, directed to him, from India, containing pearls of immense value.

Mr. Paull's talents were moderate; his person and speech mean and uninteresting: never was man less fitted by nature to be a popular leader. Resentment and ambition were the ruling passions in his bosom. He chanced, however, to have a good cause, and this insured to him, for some time, the favour of the people. But if his character does not please, his horrible end affrights us. Such is the issue of an ambition of greatness! Let it teach us moderation and contentment.

Died in the month of March last, at Nailsworth, Gloucestershire, Mr. ROBERT NORTON, Clothier, in the 64th year of his age,—he expired after a tedious and lingering indisposition, during which little or no hopes were entertained of his recovery. He was an intelligent man, of a pious, cheerful and benevolent disposition. He had thought much upon religious subjects, and his sentiments accorded with our most benevolent notions of the Deity. *His* was no dark and gloomy system, for whilst it was honourable to the divine perfections, it bore a friendly aspect on the present enjoyments, and the ultimate felicity of mankind.

And on the 14th Instant, at the same place, died Mrs. HANNAH NORTON, widow of the above Mr. Robert Norton, having survived her husband only seven weeks. She was sister of the late Dr. Caleb Evans, of Bristol. In all the relations of life she was most exemplary, her conduct as a *sister*, a *wife*, a *mother* and an *aunt*, will be long remembered with affectionate reverence and gratitude. To the poor she was a constant friend and benefactress, and her piety through all the varying scenes of life and in the hour of death supported and cheered her with the consolations of Christianity. These worthy characters so harmoniously united through their lives, and scarcely divided in their deaths, have left behind them *two sons* and *three daughters*, whose greatest pleasure will be to imitate their virtues, and to embalm their memory.

Islington. E.

Rev. W. Wood, concluded from p. 221.

In 1794, Sept. 17, on the death of his venerable friend, the Rev. Mr. Turner, of Wakefield, he paid an affectionate tribute of respect to his memory, in a funeral sermon, to which were annexed, memoirs of Mr. Turner's life and writings, by his son. The same painful office he was soon after, April 17, 1795, called to perform for his intimate friend through life, the Rev. Mr. Ralph, of Halifax; and at the close of the year 1800, for the Rev. Newcome Cappe, of York, with memoirs of his life annexed, which were afterwards superseded by the excellent life of Mr. Cappe, prefixed to his posthumous Critical Dissertations, and also to his most admirable Discourses, chiefly on devotional subjects, by the able and spirited editor of both publications, Mrs. C. Cappe, the widow of the deceased. The day after this sermon was preached, he introduced the new century with a discourse containing many suitable reflections and striking remarks. With a heart always alive to the sentiments of humanity, and animated with the amiable spirit of the gospel, he rejoiced in the (alas! fallacious) return of peace, and in his sermon on the day of thanksgiving pathetically described the miseries of war, and enforced the duties of a season of peace. These genuine principles of the Gospel of peace continued with him to the last. Not two months before his death he took the opportunity of the interesting occasion of the meeting for peace in the Cloth-Hall, to bear his testimony of continued attachment to them. His last professional appearance before the public was on the interesting occasion of the death of Dr. Priestley, which "the older members of the congregation requested him to improve by a suitable discourse on the character and labours of the minister from whom they had received their early religious impressions." In this admirable composition, to which we have

Rev. William Wood.

already alluded, he takes a full and impartial survey of the Doctor's theological, philosophical, and literary labours.

The stated and regular labours of Mr. Wood, as a preacher and pastor, were highly acceptable to a numerous and affectionate flock; to the younger part of whom he also devoted, at intervals, much time in more private instructions in the works and word of God. For this purpose he divided them into classes, after the example of his venerable predecessor, and delivered to each such instructions as appeared to him best suited to their respective ages, and previous proficiency in religious knowledge. In such a course of private instruction he was engaged at the time of his death.

Mr. Wood was a man of great cheerfulness and affability of manners, of a most open and animated countenance, which seemed particularly lighted up when he was engaged in the public exercise of his professional duties, so that those who either statedly or occasionally attended on his ministry, could scarcely avoid partaking of the glow which warmed the breast, and gave energy to the addresses of the preacher.

But he was not only eminent in the particular line of his profession; he also bore a very respectable rank as a general scholar. There were few branches of literature to which he had not paid considerable attention, but he more especially cultivated Natural History, and in Botany was particularly eminent. He was one of the original members of the Linnæan Society, was engaged as the writer of the botanical part of the Cyclopædia now publishing by Dr. Rees, and it is understood that he conducted the Natural History department in the Annual Review. Of a work just published under the title of Zoography by a gentleman of the same name, and often ascribed to him, the author of this memoir has his own authority for asserting that he had no knowledge.

Since the removal of the Academical Institution for the education of Protestant Dissenting Ministers from Manchester to York, Mr. Wood has sustained the important office of Visitor; and in this capacity, as well as in his general exertions in its favour, he was eminently serviceable to the interests of that highly respectable seminary.

Mr. Wood married, about the year 1780, Louisa, daughter of Geo. Oates, esq. of Leeds, by whom he has left two sons, and a daughter. He had for several years been subject to gouty and bilious complaints. A severe attack of both these disorders at once, in September, 1806, occasioned the sudden return of Mrs. Wood, who was absent on a journey; the hurry of which, and the fatigue of a too long and close attendance, brought on a nervous fever, of which she died, while his life was despaired of. He languished between life and death for several months, and was left in a state of extreme debility. In the summer of 1807, by the blessing of God on eminent medical skill, and unremitted filial attendance, he was wonderfully recovered; and was enabled to resume his public labours with his accustomed vigour. During the whole of the last winter his friends had been delighted with the spirit with which he had gone through his accustomed services, and the very day before he was taken ill he had preached with his usual spirit and vivacity; but on Monday the 28th of March an obstruction in the bowels came on, which baffled the efforts of his medical attendants, and he exhanged this life for a better on the Friday following, to his own great advantage, no doubt, but to the unspeakable loss of all those who had enjoyed the benefit of his instructions, or the happiness of his acquaintance.

V. F.

[The above obituary was intended to have been inserted entire in the last number, but was divided through a mistake, which no one regrets more than the editor. Some extracts from Mr. Wood's writings, illustrating his character, are arranged for insertion in the number for June, in which also an omission or two in the obituary will be repaired.]

EDITOR.

Master William Richard Venning.

Died, on Thursday evening, the 7th of April, almost *nine* years of age, MASTER WILLIAM RICHARD VENNING, son of *William Venning, Esq.* of *Holloway*. The death of this amiable youth is an additional instance of the precarious tenure by which we hold all sublunary enjoyments. Being of a very delicate constitution, his parents entertained little hope of rearing him, till within these last twelvemonths, during which his health and strength were so much improved that they began to dismiss all apprehensions,

concerning him. But, alas! these expectations were delusive, and parental fondness was doomed to experience a sore disappointment. He left school perfectly well, on the Saturday afternoon previous to his death, but did not, as was his usual custom, return on the Monday morning, owing to a slight indisposition. Indeed, his illness, if it may be called such, was so trivial, that it was not deemed necessary to procure any kind of medical assistance. The weather alone prevented his return to school. On Thursday afternoon, having, in the former part of the day, played with his brothers, he became restless and uneasy, desiring to lie down on the bed, when he all at once found that he had lost the use of his legs; his body also was observed to be spotted: a medical gentleman was immediately sent for, but he came only to witness his last moments, for he expired in his father's arms, about six in the evening, without a sigh or a groan! It is supposed that a *blood-vessel* bursting, in one of the viscera, was the occasion of his sudden and almost instantaneous dissolution. It must be a great consolation to his worthy parents, that, under this afflictive dispensation, the amiable youth retained his faculties to the last. When seized with death, he was fully aware of his awful situation. And the expressions which escaped his lips, just previous to his dissolution, were indicative of his filial affection and tenderness, as well as of his entire resignation to the will of heaven. His declaration that *he was not afraid to die*, coming from one of his tender years, must be a proof of an uncommon degree of fortitude; indeed, his attainments, intellectual and moral, were beyond his age, and justly endeared him to those who had the pleasure of knowing him. All his schoolfellows loved him; and his *tutor*, who was particularly attached to him on account of his love of learning, his uniformly good behaviour, and his engaging disposition, consecrates this tribute of respect to his memory.

The following lines, taken from a pleasing volume of poems, just published by Mrs. Iliff, would constitute a suitable *epitaph*; and they acquire an additional beauty from the reference made to the early associates and companions of the deceased.

"Step soft ye *youths!* ye *maidens* hither bring
The earliest treasures of the blooming spring:
Let the blue violet and the primrose pale
Deck the green turf, and scent the passing gale:
For *here* at rest is laid beneath this stone
A *gentle youth*, belov'd as soon as known.—
Heaven saw his virtues with a kind regard,
And call'd him *early* to his blest reward!"

His funeral sermon was preached at the Meeting-House, in Carter-lane, Sunday, April 17th, by the Rev. Thomas Tayler, who had interred him the preceding Wednesday, in Bunhill-fields. The discourse from Luke xxvi. 5, 6, and 7, was very appropriate, and calculated to infuse into the minds of the distressed relatives and friends, the blessed consolations of our common Christianity.

Islington. J. E.

May 7, in the 68th year of his age SIR JOHN CARTER, Knt. of Portsmouth.

(*Further particulars in our next.*)

INTELLIGENCE.

PROSECUTION OF MR. STONE.

The case of Mr. Stone is familiar to our readers. We have laboured, not unsuccessfully, to interest them in it. They differ in opinion, probably, with regard to the propriety of Mr. Stone's continuing in a church which he believes to be antichristian and idolatrous; but there can be but one opinion with regard to his prosecution; viz. that it originates in a spirit not congenial with the gospel, and indicates a state of ecclesiastical affairs in this country diametrically opposite to that of the apostolic churches.

The trial came on in the Consistory Court, Doctors' Commons, (a court whose jurisdiction the apostles, if on earth, would scarcely have acknowledged, though they might probably have *felt*,) on Friday, the 13th instant, before

Sir William Scott. The charges, briefly, were that, in his Visitation Sermon, preached at Danbury, Essex, July 8, 1806, and afterwards published, he impugned the docrines of the miraculous conception of the virgin Mary, the Holy Trinity, and the divinity and atonement of Christ. They were admitted by Mr. Stone.

Sir John Nichol and Dr. Lawrence, for the prosecution, stated, that the statute of the 13th of Elizabeth, enacts, that if any person shall advisably maintain or affirm any doctrine directly contrary and repugnant to any of the articles of religion, and shall persist in the same, and not revoke his error, he shall be deprived of his ecclesiastical preferments. Dr. Lawrence, we understand, made a respectful allusion to Mr. Lindsey's sacrifice of his ecclesiastical possessions and prospects to his conscience, contrasting with it Mr. Stone's retaining his living, in spite of his virtual nonconformity, which, with all possible respect for the reverend gentleman, he scarcely knew how to reconcile with sincerity.

Mr. Stone pleaded his own defence. As soon as he begun, Sir William Scott intimated to him, that the only legal defence he could make would be by shewing that he had not preached and published doctrines contrary to the established church. And upon Mr. Stone's referring to the Bishop of London, as the instigator of the prosecution, and to Mr. Bishop, as the agent in it, Sir William took occasion to inform him, that the Bishop was wholly unconnected with the affair, his name appearing in the citation only as a matter of form; and that Mr. Bishop acted, not from choice, but from official duty, he being the King's Lawyer, and the same in that Court as the Attorney-General in the other Courts. We believe Sir William Scott to have meant and insinuated that the cause was undertaken *at the instance of the Government*. This, in the opinion of the public in general, will be honourable to the present *Protestant Ministry*—our opinion on this, as well as some other points, is heterodox—we should have been as well pleased with less NO POPERY and more TOLERATION, or in plainer and truer speech, less popery and more Christianity.—The defence of Mr. Stone occupied nearly the same ground as his letters in the *Monthly Repository*, and his Letter to the Bishop of London; that is, his engagements with his ordaining Bishop. dress took up nearly two hours. It contained some strong and striking remarks, and some affecting appeals. Mr. Stone appeared on this occasion in a peculiarly interesting and honourable light. Even those that on dissenting principles cannot bring themselves to approve the continuance of "an Unitarian minister in a Trinitarian church," must admire his frankness and boldness before his judges. He appeared as the confessor of Unitarianism. He conceded, he concealed nothing. He did not provoke severity, but neither did he cringe to power. We cannot help thinking, that the gentlemen employed against him must have wished that they had not been constituted arbiters of spiritual matters.

As Mr. Stone had employed no counsel, Sir John Nichol said, that he should not be long in his reply. He insisted on Mr. Stone's general engagements to be faithful to the church—to those engagements Mr. Stone had not been faithful—he therefore prayed for the judgment of the Court.

Sir William Scott then declared himself called upon to pronounce the sentence of the law: viz. the privation of Mr. Stone of his benefice; but as he wished every indulgence to be given to the reverend gentleman, he should defer sentence till the next Court-day, that he might have an opportunity of considering and revoking his errors: unless a recantation were made before that time, the sentence of privation must inevitably be passed.

Thus then this affair is brought to an issue; and before this comes under the reader's eye, Mr. Stone will in all probability be no longer a clergyman, or member of the Church of England: for we cannot apprehend that having proceeded so far, he will descend to any retractation or apology. His merit will now lie in suffering in a cause, in which he has been so active.

Whether the friends, in the church of clerical liberty; and, out of the church of the Unitarian doctrine, will suffer Mr. Stone to sink under the weight of his prosecution and his privation, it is not for us to determine. He will very probably appeal from an Act of Parliament; (erroneously, as appears, considered *obsolete*) to the public. This work is open to him and to his friends;

and censurers. He will rejoice with us, whether he personally be regarded as worthy of assistance or not, if by his means, even his privations, the great cause of free inquiry and rational Christianity be promoted.

May 18.

P. S. Since the above was written, Mr. Stone has suffered the sentence of *privation*. On Friday the 20th instant, he was called upon by the court to revoke his errors. If he displayed (according to the newspaper reports,) a stronger desire of retaining his benefice than some of his friends might have wished, if, in pleading for a *salvo* for his conscience, he betrayed an unseemly reluctance to testify his sincerity by a costly sacrifice, let not our readers judge him harshly. He has not recanted; he is thrown upon the world in old age for support; and we cannot but think, that even the Bishop of London, and Sir W. Scott, would gladly relieve their feelings by entering their names upon a list of subscribers for an annuity to Mr. Stone, equal in value to his forfeited benefice. Where will this inquisition for heresy end? Bishops are scarcely secure upon their thrones.

FREE-THINKING CHRISTIANS.

Under the above appellation, a small religious society has of late attracted considerable notice in the metropolis. By this portentous name, the members avow, that they mean only to distinguish themselves from the *unthinking* multitude. The society has existed nine or ten years. It assembled till of late, but with little success, in Old Change, Cheapside. Not long since it removed its meetings to No. 5, Cateaton Street, and put forth hand-bills, notifying the subjects of discussion, among which were the Trinity, Miraculous Conception, &c.—These bills alarmed, it is said, the Bishop of London, Dr. Porteus, "who engaged the Lord Mayor of London, (Mr. Ansley,) to interfere." He accordingly sent for the heads of the Society to the Mansion-house, and an interview took place, on the 6th of February. He demanded of them an explanation of their religious opinions; they "as Englishmen and Dissenters, disclaimed any right on the part of his Lordship, to enter into an examination of the kind." He then told them that, "HE WOULD NOT ALLOW ANY RELIGIOUS MEETINGS THAT HELD OPINIONS CONTRARY TO THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH OR IN UNCONSECRATED PLACES."—A declaration of which his Lordship must now be sufficiently ashamed. A notable resolution this for the first magistrate of a city, of which a very large proportion of the most considerable citizens are Dissenters,—that magistrate, too, brought up among the Dissenters, and indebted, if we be not mis-informed, for the first rudiments of his education to the author of the "Dissenter's Catechism," and the "Nonconformist's Memorial." To the Lord Mayor's threat, the members opposed firmness of argument and earnestness of remonstrance. They presented him with their printed laws, a book containing many of their sentiments, and Mr. Elwall's trial for denying the Trinity. "His Lordship seemed convinced that he was out of his province," and partly admitted, that he was put upon this business by a superior, meaning we apprehend Bishop Porteus. He only desired, at the conclusion of the conference, that these formidable speakers would register their place of meeting in the Bishop's court, and then they would be out of his jurisdiction. In obedience to this desire, they shut up their place till they could get it registered; they discovered that it would be necessary to register the speakers also. For this latter purpose, they applied in a body at the quarter sessions, Guildhall, where they expected the Lord Mayor to preside. His Lordship was not present: but Alderman Combe, who was on the bench, ordered the clerk of the court, Mr. Shelton, "to execute the necessary business." He, alleging that it would be more regular, desired them to call upon him at his office. They did so, and there met Mr. Sylvester, the recorder of London, who began to question them about their religious opinions. They very properly demurred to his authority, upon which he declared that he would not register them, unless they appeared in open court at the Old Bailey; adding, (if the report be correct,) with an insolence that belongs, we are told,

not to the man, but the office, that if their cause were good, they would not refuse to make this public appearance. With a perseverance and boldness that does them honour, they went and made their demand at the Old Bailey, before the Lord Mayor, addressing him and complaining of their ill usage. Some altercation took place between them and the recorder and his clerk. They were then dismissed, (this was Saturday evening,) with a promise from the Lord Mayor, that if they would attend early on Monday morning, he would make a court on purpose to register them. On the Monday they were at their post, when two of them only were sworn, and the rest were referred to Hicks's Hall, on the ground, we believe, of not being citizens of London. In the county court, no obstacle was raised; and thus the society triumphed, with the New Testament in one hand, and the Act of Toleration in the other, over ignorance, subtlety and bigotry.

The affair being soon made known by means of the public prints, crowds flocked to the meetings of this little sect. They boast of having had among their auditors, on the first Sunday after matters were arranged, one of the city marshals, and a hired short-hand writer. They have been at length obliged to discontinue their evening assembly in Cateaton-street, the smallness of the room, (though it will hold several hundreds of people,) leading them to apprehend danger from the pressure of the multitude.

The names of the leading members are not published. Their tenets are for the most part such as are held by Unitarians. They are inimical, however, to all public worship; and have neither singing or prayer in their social meetings, but debating only. They abhor paid preachers, but can object no longer to preachers by *profession*. They disuse the ceremonies of baptism and the Lord's supper. It is said, they think oaths unlawful; but as they have taken oaths, and religious ones, this must be a mistake.

In the letter, by "one of the members of the church," in one of the newspapers (from which this account is chiefly drawn up,) there is a complaint of the Dissenters, not taking up the cause of the "Free-thinking Christians." But the Dissenters, as well as others, were ignorant of the matter, till it was concluded. And had they been formally made acquainted with it, what could they have done? They indeed are not backward to assert the rights of their body, but they cannot prevent shuffling on the part of the executors of the laws. Besides that Dissenters, in general, regard their meeting-houses, as places of *worship*, and do not feel any particular sympathy with one debating society more than another,—with a society that debates on Sunday, more than one that debates on Monday,—with one that debates theology, more than one that debates politics. This may be prejudice, and we do not vindicate it, —but it serves to shew that before these Christians had made an appeal to the Dissenters and explained and justified their proceedings, it was unreasonable to expect any particular support.

The "Free-thinking Christians," have, in their statement of their conduct and views, displayed a coarseness, which does not beseem the cause of Christian inquiry. To abuse Christians in general is not the way to conciliate or improve them. Priests are indeed fair game; but it was hardly to be expected from a set of liberal Christians, who owe all their present important opinions to Lardner, Priestley and Winchester, that they should adopt, without any modification, the maxim of a poet, who all his life vacillated between popery and infidelity, that "Priests of all religions are the same;" that all religious teachers, whether in orders, or *pretended holy orders*, are alike destitute of sense and principle,—fools or knaves—no real difference between William Huntingdon and Robert Robinson, Bishop Horsley and Dr. Price.—Is it the circumstance of *taking pay* that converts a religious teacher into a priest—an useful (in *Cateaton-street* it will not be denied that religious teaching is useful,) into a noxious character? But a teacher may be *paid* in different modes,—with "solid pudding," or with "empty praise." They who refuse the former are most likely to take their full tithe of the latter, which of the two is more pernicious; for inflation of mind is surely worse than sleekness of body. After all, the worst part of *priestcraft* is censoriousness and intolerance, and condemning men in the gross, by whole denominations and professions; and a man may play the priest under cover of liberty as well as of authority, in the

meanest meeting-house, as well as in the most magnificent cathedral, in coloured clothes as well as in black ones. Robert Robinson, who will not be suspected of partiality to priests, used to say that the very worst animal in a religious assembly, was——— a LORD-BROTHER.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE AFRICAN INSTITUTION.

On the 25th of March, 1807, a day sacred to humanity, an Act for abolishing the Slave Trade, received the Royal Assent. It was brought into the House of Commons by Mr. Fox, and into the House of Lords by LORD GRENVILLE. The ministers were sincere in the measure, which Mr. Pitt never had been, and they consequently carried it. It was, we are told, a measure which lay near the heart of Mr. Fox, who was a generous statesman, and who lived only for mankind.

Soon after the abolition act had passed, the leading men, who had patronized and carried it, or who rejoiced in it, convened a meeting of the friends of the much injured Africans, at which, on the 14th of April, it was resolved to institute a society, under the name of the AFRICAN INSTITUTION. Of the proceedings of this meeting, a full account was given, by a gentleman who had taken an active part in it, in our *second volume*, p. 219.—The second meeting of the society, was holden (by adjournment from the 12th of May) on the 15th of July, when as before, the Duke of Gloucester was in the chair; a prince, more distinguished by his virtues than his rank, and whose sentiments, with regard to the Slave Trade, are the more honourable, as being totally opposite to those of some other branches of the royal family. The Duke has more lately displayed his sense of justice and humanity, by signing a protest on the journal of the House of Lords, against the late unprincipled, and cowardly attack on Copenhagen.—At this second meeting, a Report from the Committee " containing a view of the objects proposed by the Institution, and the means for carrying those objects into effect, together with rules and regulations for its interior constitution," was read, and ordered, to be printed. It was resolved that a subscription of sixty guineas, should constitute an hereditary governor; of thirty guineas, a life governor; and of three guineas per annum, a governor; one guinea per annum, a member; and ten guineas, a member for life. The members to vote at all meetings of the Institution, but to be incapable of election to any part of its management.

The most interesting circumstance at this meeting, was a short, but impressive speech from a Black, who declared that he could not suffer the meeting to pass, without the grateful acknowledgements of at least one of the sable complexion. The speaker, we understood to be Mr. William Sancho, who has some literary engagement, under Sir Joseph Banks. He is, we apprehend a son of the ingenious Ignatius Sancho, an African, who died in 1780, and whose letters were published, with Memoirs of his life, by a lady, and have lately been republished.

The *Report* has been since published, forming an 8vo. pamphlet, of 78 pages. It is elegantly written, and is adapted to satisfy inquirers, and to silence objectors. We wish we could hope that the spirit of it will be infused into the following abstract.

" A PLAN," say the Committee, truly, " which proposes to introduce the blessings of civilized society, among a people, sunk in ignorance and barbarism, and occupying no less than a fourth part of the habitable globe*, holds forth an object, the contemplation of which, it will be allowed, is sufficient to warm the coldest, and fill the amplest mind."

They then proceed to shew, that the plan is not disproportioned to their means. Individuals and strangers have often effected great changes in the manners and institutions of a country. Conquest, though the ordinary, is not the only medium of spreading civilization. Next to christianity, commerce has been the instrument of the greatest and most progressive improvement of mankind.

* " Africa is computed to contain 150 millions of inhabitants, but the interior is so little known, that the estimate is purely conjectural."

The practice of vaccination, originating with an individual, and spreading by means of a voluntary association, within a few years, over the greater part of the habitable world, is adduced as a case in point, an example, and an encouragement.

The African character opposes no real objection to the design of the association. "The portrait of the Negro has seldom been drawn, but by the pencil of his oppressor, and he has sat for it in the distorted attitude of slavery." His revilers have given in the most contradictory testimony, and therefore their evidence is nugatory. He has been accused of *falsehood* and indolence; but the charge is sufficiently refuted by Travellers into Africa, and especially *Mr Park*, who says, speaking of the rich and valuable productions that this country might be made to produce, that "*Nothing is wanting to this end, but example, to enlighten the minds of the natives; and instruction, to enable them to direct their industry to proper objects.*"

The North American Indians are not naturally superior to the Africans, but the Quakers have lately proved, that they are capable of instruction, and of the arts of life. (See the Review of two Pamphlets on this subject, M. Repos. Vol. II. p. 606.—609.) "The Government of the United States, convinced by experience, of the value of this reformation, has lately granted a considerable sum from the public purse, for its further extension; and the application of this aid, has been wisely committed to the same benevolent society, which has so judiciously led the way in this interesting work."

The disastrous issue of the Sierra Leone colony is improperly urged, as an objection to the African Institution, which is a design altogether different: the failure of that benevolent plan, was brought on by causes not affecting the present society. The Sierra Leone company was established before the slave trade was abolished, in expectation however of that event; the carrying on of the trade in the vicinity of Sierra Leone, completely stopped the progress, and interrupted the prosperity of the colony. During the whole period of the existence of the company also the mother country was in a state of war, which oppressed the infant state, and laid it open to pillage and devastation by the enemy. Besides that, the civil establishment, which the company imprudently engaged to support, was a weight which its funds were unable to support. The first settlers in new colonies have seldom succeeded But the history of Sierra Leone is so far encouraging, as it shews that the African may be taught, and civilized, and habituated to regular industry. And the colony, now in the hands of Government, is an eligible station, where the Institution may begin its labours with a prospect of success.

The African Institution disclaims all religious projects; it is not a missionary society. It aims not at colonial establishments. It will not engage in commerce. Its only object is the improvement of Africa, by setting on foot journies of discovery, by establishing schools, by honorary and other rewards to enterprising traders, and by whatever means time and opportunity may disclose.

The present is a favourable period, for commencing the labours of a benevolent African society. The slave trade is abolished by Great Britain, America, and Denmark;—France, Spain, and Holland, are prevented by the war from carrying it on. The Portuguese branch of the trade alone remains. Now as the Africans have been accustomed to European goods, and as no way of getting them will be open but that of honourable trade, their necessities will drive them into commerce, and that will beget industry, which again is the parent of many virtues. "Nor ought we" the Committee conclude, "to overlook the benefits which this country is likely to derive from such a developement of the faculties of the African Continent. While that gigantic power, at the feet of which the Continent of Europe now lies prostrate, is employing his utmost efforts to prevent our commerce from flowing in its ancient channels, surely it becomes us to cherish every reasonable prospect of finding other outlets. We have achieved a great and splendid act of national justice, in abolishing the slave trade. The chain which bound Africa to the dust, and prevented the success of every effort that was made to raise her, is now broken. Let our benevolence interpose to repair the ruin and degradation which we have contributed to bring upon her, and to teach her the use of her liberated faculties; and we may soon discover, by our own happy experience, that in exercising justice and benevolence towards her, whatever may be the apparent sacrifice, we have only been laying a more solid foundation, for the enlargement of our own national prosperity."

UNITARIANISM IN AMERICA.

About the year 1796, when Dr. Priestley was on a visit to Philadelphia, an Unitarian Society was formed, which existed till the year 1800, when it was so much reduced by deaths and removals, that it was thought expedient to discontinue the meetings. Matters continued in this state, till about the end of the year 1806. At that time, Mr. Christie, formerly of Montrose, (author of a volume of Discourses on the Divine Unity) being about to quit his situation, as tutor of a country academy, about 30 miles from Philadelphia, it was resolved to attempt the re-establishment of the Society, through his means. He was accordingly invited by the remaining members of the former Society, to try the experiment, by preaching in the Universalists' Church at Philadelphia, as Dr. Priestley formerly had done. In February 1807, Mr. C. removed to Philadelphia, and entered upon his charge, and at the same time, opened a school. It was not long, however, before some persons taking offence at Mr C.'s bold manner of preaching, (as, for instance, charging the worshippers of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit with idolatry,) withdrew; upon which, the remaining members thought it necessary for the interests of the Society, to draw up a code of laws. The consequences of this measure have been already detailed: (M. Repos. Vol. III. p. 55.) the New Constitution was so much disapproved of, by Mr. Christie and a few of his friends, that they separated, and formed a second Unitarian Church.

The "Constitution" itself is now in our hands. It is a handsome 8vo. pamphlet of 34 pages. It consists of a *Declaration of Belief, of Rules*, and *of Explanatory Observations*.

The *Declaration* is composed of the following Articles, most excellent in themselves, whatever may be thought of requiring Christians to subscribe them: "1. That this Society claims, and by the present act exercises, the right, which, as intelligent and accountable beings they possess, and which is guaranteed to them by the excellent constitution of their country, of judging for themselves in matters of religion, and of performing the social acts thereof in that form and manner which conscience dictates as most rational, decent, and acceptable. 2. That the only proper object of supreme adoration and worship is, the *one living and true God, the Father*, in whom they believe as the Maker of the heavens, the earth, and all things therein. 3. That they receive the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the authentic records of his revealed will to mankind. 4. That they cordially and thankfully acknowledge *Jesus Christ* as the Son of God, the promised Messiah, to whom all obedience ought to be rendered as to the distinguished and approved messenger of the love of God to the human race—whom he raised from the dead, and by whom he will at the last day recal all mankind to life, and render unto them according to their works. 5. That they believe the *Holy Spirit* to be that extraordinary divine energy and power, which was granted to prophets and holy men of old, but which was manifested pre eminently in Christ, and afterwards in his apostles and other believers of the primitive age, whereby they were enabled to bear miraculous testimony to the truth of the gospel, and to spread it through all nations of the world."

The *rules* vest all power in the body of the church. They reduce the authority of the pastor to a degree to which few ministers on this side the Atlantic would stoop. Provision is even made (which is surely incompatible with the respect due to a Christian teacher) for preferring complaints against him: these complaints are to be made in writing, and signed at least by three persons; they are then to be laid before the "Committee of Management," who are to present them to the whole Society, at the conclusion of one of the meetings for public worship, who are to appoint a day for a special meeting, when it is to be determined by ballot, whether the proceedings shall be discontinued, or the pastor be suspended or dismissed. This is over-doing democracy itself. With respect to *baptism*, nothing is determined; the *Lord's supper* is to be administered six times a year.

The *Explanatory Observations* are, for the most part, sound and manly. These Philadelphian Unitarians are sensible of the value of civil and religious liberty. "Our simple institutions," say they, "will, we trust, be found fully adequate to the great purposes of decency and order; and we apprehend it will be

nothing to their discredit with any genuine friend of rational liberty, if they bear any resemblance to the civil code of our country in the circumstance of appointing *representative* officers, for a term, and *judicial*, during good behaviour, while the ultimate authority is left with *the people at large*." Again: "In this highly-favoured country, the heaven-born guest, *religion*, presents herself to every man precisely in that form under which he shews the most readiness to entertain her: its excellent constitution (the happiest effort of the kind which the human understanding ever made), dropping the degrading idea of *toleration*, of which some other governments boast so much, discharges its whole duty by assuring to every individual the free and uninterrupted exercise of the dearest right with which his Maker has invested him, and which it is not within the province of any civil institution to confer or to restrain."

With the "constitution" of which we have made considerable use, we have received also another pamphlet (of 27 pages,) called "No. 1, of Unitarian Pieces and Tracts," under the following title: "The Right, Duty, and Importance of Free Inquiry in the Matters of Religion. A Discourse delivered at the Evening Lecture, instituted by the First Society of Unitarian Christians, in the City of Philadelphia, November 1, 1807. By a Member of the Society." From 1 Thess v. 21. *Prove all things—hold fast that which is good.* This member of the Society, whose name is not given, argues in favour of free inquiry, religious zeal, and Unitarianism, in a rational and manly way. He states that the Evening Lecture* was set on foot to afford the public an opportunity of learning the principles of the Society, and of correcting their misapprehensions of them. For this purpose, the first Lecture (now under consideration) is published, and is to be followed by a series of Unitarian publications, original or borrowed. This is the true way of enlightening mens' minds. Preaching will draw attention to books, and books will follow up the good effects of preaching. The lecturer expresses in the Discourse his satisfaction and joy in hearing of the efforts that Unitarians in this country are making to spread the truth; especially by popular preaching, and the improved version of the New Testament. He even hopes, that zeal may lead some one of our popular preachers over to America. "Believing, therefore," says he, "as we most sincerely do, that the interests of vital religion, and consequently the happiness of the human race, are nearly connected with the universal reception of the doctrine of the unity of God, and others connected with and flowing from it, we cannot but feel great satisfaction in the accounts lately received of their spread in the British islands. The same expedients which at first contributed so materially to the prevalence of Methodism, are now employed by the Unitarian preachers there. THEY TRAVEL ABOUT THE COUNTRY, AND HOLD MEETINGS IN BARNS, IN FIELDS, IN THE STREETS OF MARKET-TOWNS AND VILLAGES, WHICH ARE NUMEROUSLY AND DEVOUTLY ATTENDED. IT IS ADDED THE UNITARIAN SENTIMENTS FIND THEIR WAY AMONG THE METHODISTS THEMSELVES." It is further announced, that a translation of the New Testament, in which the errors of that at present in common use will be noted and avoided, is preparing for speedy publication. As some of the members of this Society are in habits of correspondence with individuals of the Unitarian Associations in England, opportunities will be embraced of giving them information respecting our state on this side the Atlantic; AND WE INDULGE THE PLEASING HOPE THAT THE LIKE ZEAL WHICH ANIMATES THEIR MINISTERS TO SUCH NEW EXERTIONS IN THE CAUSE OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH, MAY LEAD ONE OR MORE OF THEM OVER HITHER, who may acceptably supply our present vacancy, and be the means of collecting a numerous and flourishing congregation."

We learn further, by a private letter, that one of the German churches in Philadelphia lately divided upon the question of having the service performed at certain times in the English language, and that the party who favoured this arrangement, having opened a church of their own, have been fortunate in procuring a young man, a native of Germany, perfect master of both languages, who preaches in German only once a month, whose manner is popular, and his sentiments inclining to the Unitarian doctrine, though he does not openly avow it, thinking it safest to bring people over gradually.

* Mr. Christie, likewise, following the example of the *First Society of Unitarians*, has instituted an *Evening Lecture* in his own place of worship.

WILTSHIRE CONFERENCE OF GENERAL BAPTISTS.

The eighth half yearly meeting of this Conference was held at Salt-lane, in Salisbury, on Easter Tuesday and Wednesday; the following ministers and preachers assembled on the occasion, viz. J. Kingsford, of Portsea; A. Aldridge, of Lyndhurst; W. Smedley, of Downton; H. Short, of Iwerne; D. Jones, and S. Webley, of Trowbridge; J. Hook, of Melksham; and G. Roberts, of Warminster; nearly all of whom took some part of the public service. As in former meetings, there were three sermons delivered, and all on given subjects. Mr. Kingsford, on Tuesday evening delivered the first, on the "Reconciliation of penitent Sinners to God;" Mr. Aldridge on Wednesday afternoon the second, on "the Improvement of Time;" and Mr. Jones in the evening, the third, on "Christian Union." The morning part of Wednesday was taken up in consultation on different matters relating to the churches, from which the reports were upon the whole pleasing and satisfactory, and particularly so appeared the prospect respecting Salt-lane, where the preaching of the general Baptists, though not hitherto so constant as could be wished, had tended in a great measure to revive the cause of Rational Religion, and where much more good may be done, should the hopes that have been entertained of the settlement of a suitable minister in the place, be realized.

On Wednesday evening at the close of the public service, there was an *open communion*, and Baptists, general and particular, as well as Methodists, Independents, and Presbyterians, all partook together: this, it is hoped, will have a happy effect, in softening the rigour of party-prejudice.

The church at Trowbridge requested the next conference, and it was agreed that it should be held there on the last Wednesday in October; when the following ministers will be expected to preach, viz. Mr. Smedley on the Scripture Doctrine of Regeneration; Mr. Aldridge on the Excellence of the Christian Temper; and Mr. Kingsford on the present and future Advantages of Religion.

D. J.

NOTICES.

THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF GENERAL BAPTISTS will be holden, in the meeting-house, Worship-street, London, on Tuesday, June 7. The members will meet for business, early in the morning. Divine service will commence at eleven o'clock, the Rev. R. Wright, of Wisbeach, to preach the sermon. The friends will afterwards dine together, at the King's Head Tavern, in the Poultry. Dinner at half-past three o'clock.

UNITARIAN FUND. The anniversary of this society will be holden on Wednesday, June, 8th, in the chapel, Parliament-court, Artillery-lane, Bishopsgate-street. Public service will begin at eleven o'clock; the Rev. James Lyons, late of Hull, whose sermon, avowing the Unitarian doctrine, is reviewed in the present number, will preach the discourse to the Society. After service, *the report of the committee* will be read, and the other business, such as choosing officers for the ensuing year, &c. be transacted. The members and friends of the Society will dine together at the King's-Head Tavern, in the Poultry, at half-past three o'clock. Notices and tickets will be sent round to all the subscribers, within the bills of mortality: other persons meaning to favour the Society with their company, are requested to apply for tickets (which are five shillings each) to the treasurer, John Christie, Esq. No. 52, Mark-lane; the secretary, the Rev. Robert Aspland, Hackney; or the stewards, Mr. William Titford, Union-street, Spitalfields; Mr. Thomas Freeman, Dyer's-court, Aldermanbury; and Mr. David Eaton, No. 187, High Holborn.

WESTERN UNITARIAN BOOK SOCIETY.—The anniversary of this Society will be held at Bristol, on Wednesday, June 22d. The Rev. Dr. Carpenter, of Exeter, is to preach the sermon.

The annual meeting of the SOUTH-WALES UNITARIAN SOCIETY will be holden at Gellionnen, near Swansea, on Thursday the 23d of June instant. The sermon, to be preached by the Rev. Thomas Davies, of Coed-y-Cymmer, and the Rev. Jenkin Rees, of Merthyr; or in case of the absence of the latter, by the Rev. Benj. Philips, of St. Clears.

A meeting of the ministers in the Presbyterian connexion, who reside in the counties of NOTTINGHAM, DERBY, LINCOLN, and the South part of YORKSHIRE, will be held at Lincoln, on the

last Wednesday in June—(29). When it is expected that Mr. Piper, of Norton, near Sheffield, will preach, and Mr. Whitelegg, of Nottingham, will conduct the devotional part of the service.

SOUTHERN UNITARIAN BOOK SOCIETY.—The annual meeting of this Society will be held at Ditchling, Sussex, on Wednesday, July 13. The Rev. Russel Scott, of Portsmouth, will preach the sermon to the Society, in the morning, in the Rev. A. Bennett's meeting-house. There will also be service in the evening.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Mr. Marsom has favoured us with a Defence of the Pre-existence of Christ, in reply to Mr. Belsham; of which Letter I. shall appear in our next.

The Letter of W. from *Plymouth*, is highly gratifying, as it expresses his good opinion of the conduct of our work, and also his agreement in opinion with us on an important political point; but as the M. Repos. is a Theological and Moral, and not a political work, we cannot *discuss* public measures, though we may be sometimes called upon to advert to them.

We rejoice that the letter of the *Churchman*, in our last, entitled, "Unitarians not rational Christians," is likely to provoke much interesting discussion. "The Fallacy of the Churchman's arguments exposed," by "A Unitarian Christian," shall have a place in our next.

Mr. Flower's reply to Mr. Palmer, on the Life of Robinson, came too late for the present, and shall appear in the succeeding number. Mr. Sturch, on natural religion, in strictures on a passage in the Bishop of London's sermons, with a variety of other communications, shall be inserted as early as possible.

We take it for granted, that Mr. Carpenter has closed his reply to Mr. Belsham's letters,———unless therefore we hear further from that gentleman, we shall, in our next, proceed with Mr. Belsham's final answer, with which we have been favoured.

We have received several subscriptions to the new version of the New Testament, which have been, or shall be forwarded, to the treasurer of the fund, for carrying on that object.

We have also received a letter from a correspondent, signing him or herself *Justitia*, dated London, May 7, 1808, enclosing *fifteen pounds, five shillings*, for the YORK ACADEMY; of which ten pounds is a present to the fund, for procuring a *third tutor*, and the remaining five guineas an *annual subscription*. This handsome contribution shall be duly applied. Our correspondent's letter came too late for insertion, but we give the substance of it.———"Wishing to see the state of the subscription, &c. to the York Academy, the accounts of which are settled in February, he applied to one of the gentlemen whose name appears at the bottom of the annual statements, for the printed account. This was on the last day in March. He told him" (our correspondent) "that he had not received any papers, had heard nothing on the subject for several months, and very justly observed, that such institutions, however excellent, frequently come to nothing, for want of proper exertion."—In a subsequent note, our correspondent informs us that he has made inquiries, equally fruitless, within the present month.———"He suggests to the trustees of the academy, the propriety of publishing in a small pamphlet, the names and addresses of the subscribers, the amount of their subscriptions and donations, prefaced with a particular account of the rise and progress of the academy, the number of pupils, expense of sending one thither, the state of the funds, form of bequests, &c. &c. One of these should be sent to every subscriber, and a certain number to every Unitarian chapel in the Kingdom, in which an annual collection for the academy is recommended, &c. &c. At least some of these particulars might be published in the Monthly Repository, (adds our correspondent) nothing being more desirable than that the only impartial theological magazine should subserve the interests of the only liberal theological academy in the kingdom."

We have omitted nothing material in Justitia's letter, of which the managers or friends of the York Academy, will take what notice they deem proper. It is to us a matter of great satisfaction that the MONTHLY REPOSITORY is becoming increasingly serviceable to all our liberal religious institutions. This is a proof of its success, and an earnest of its future prosperity.

The Rev. Mr. Higginson's vindication of the late Dr. Percival's character shall appear as early as our various pledges will permit.

We scarcely know what to do with the following letter, from an unknown hand. It is written with too much good humour to be angrily thrown aside, and at the same time with some portion of that levity, which it is designed to rebuke. In all doubtful cases, however, we incline in favour of our correspondents, especially when our own conduct is arraigned. Such as it is, then, the reader shall have it: if we deserve the lash of irony, we will not, by a stretch of prerogative, skreen ourselves from it.

A GENTLE REBUKE OF THE EDITOR.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

Mr. Editor, *Idle Lane*, May 19th, 1808.

I am a new correspondent of your's, though not quite an unpractised writer. For several years, I have amused myself with collecting materials for an edition of Tom Durfey's "Pills to purge Melancholy," which has been long out of print. To the "Mirror of Fashion," I am an occasional contributor. I also communicated three jests, undoubted originals, to the last edition of "Joe Millar." Such are my claims to your regard, though I little expected, till very lately, to become a correspondent of the "Monthly Repository."

The title of your work was known to me from its commencement. I have a neighbour whom I, with a few honest fellows like myself, occasionally visit, from common courtesy, and because he is a well-meaning man, though too *sombre* for us, and indeed a *quiz*. He has often tried to make us in love with your magazine, declaring that it was entertaining as well as instructive. The last epithet was enough to spoil all, and, in phrase theatrical, you were immediately *damned*.

Looking in at my neighbour's this morning, when he happened to be from home, I saw your last number on his table, open at a page where he had written "Common stuff." Knowing his false taste, I was encouraged to read; but I am unable to express to you, Mr. Editor, how I was gratified with the "Original Anecdotes of Dr. Goldsmith," which my dull neighbour had disapproved. The Monthly Repository is now really entertaining. Thus it is when a mere particle of fun comes into the possession of a skilful artist. By minute accuracy and ingenious amplification, he can, like a *gold-beater*, spread it over two pages and a half.

I had before heard of a forged letter as a trick often played off by apprentices upon cook maids. The candle and the "Cheshire cheese," I am persuaded, is an original. The scene was so admirably described that I could not refrain from shewing it to a caricaturist of my acquaintance, who eagerly seized it as a subject for his pencil; the town being much in want of something new. Look about you, Mr. Editor, in the high streets, and you may perhaps discover a view of Dr. Milner's kitchen, William in a morning dress, suited to a footman, who "cleans shoes, &c." and Goldsmith in an usher's dishabille. "Over the fire place in the kitchen," the pretended and the "real candle." My friend promises to make a due acknowledgment at the bottom of his print, by a reference to "the Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature."

I had before met with anecdotes of Goldsmith, but with none possessing "humour and cheerfulness," to suit my taste. I just remember one which describes the poet on his rambles through Switzerland, as securing a supper and a lodging by the enticement of his violin at a peasant's door; but this story was intermixed with wise saws upon the distresses and resources of genius, suited only to those whose favourite motto is written, I believe, "Utile dulci." My motto, Mr. Editor, always was, and I hope always will be, "Vive la bagatelle:" pray adopt this in future instead of those hard words on your blue cover.—

Go on, Sir, to give us anecdotes *a la bagatelle;* and then, though you may displease a few dull souls, depend on all my relations as constant readers and occasional correspondents. We are a very large family, as you will allow when I have subscribed myself, your's,

DICKY GOSSIP.

P. S. I depend on seeing this in your next.